The Dusk and the Dawn

by DarkJediQueen

Summary

Aaron Hotchner wasn’t sure what he thought about the New God that he was saddled with. He wasn’t sure what he thought about Jason Gideon just deciding that they even needed a God on the team. Especially a New God that looked like a foal just learning to walk.

Notes

Year: Pre-Show-Current

Spoilers: Up Through Season 14

Notes: While this takes the New Gods and Old Gods from American Gods by Neil Gaiman, knowledge of that book or show is not needed.

Beta: Grammarly

This is an Author Chose Not to Use Archive Warnings story, this is not in reference to the actual archive warnings. I will still mark those for this story. This is in reference to any other warnings that will come that are not AO3’s big warnings. I am dealing with a history that’s rife with issues when it comes to God, Gods, and the world at large. This is very much going
to be read at your own risk if the discussion of certain topics can trigger you. Feel free to email me to ask me about things and I will. My email is on my profile page.

See the end of the work for more notes.
Chapter 1

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Humans are curious. Even though they know that they should fear me, they don't. Their want of knowledge makes them unafraid of things that should scare them to never come out into the dark again. I watch them approach the beast that is a God, but they don't even think it something to fear until he bares his fangs. Even then they only get out of biting range. When the claws come out, they move back further, getting out of swiping range. They don't see the other animals, that the God had borrowed the form of. Not until it's too late and the humans are surrounded and to be made a meal of. One is allowed to escape because how is the knowledge that animals should be feared spread if the humans can't pass on that fear through words.

Mid-October 2004

Aaron Hotchner sat at his desk and looked at the file that was in front of him. He had heard a rumor that Jason Gideon was spending more time at the Academy than he usually did when teaching. A longtime friend at the Academy had figured out why and felt it necessary to tell Aaron. Aaron though was a little confused. It seemed that Gideon had pushed to allow a recruit into the Academy before the age of twenty-three. The young man had turned twenty-three before the end of his stint at the Academy, which was a week away. Whereas the young man's birthday had just passed a week before.

Doctor Spencer Reid had more degrees than people twice his age. Doctorates in Psychology, Chemistry, Abnormal Psychology, Forensic Psychology and Social Psychology and bachelors in Mathematics, Engineering, Sociology, and Clinical Psychology. The list was unbelievable until it came to the part where his estimated IQ of two hundred and fifty and a reading speed of at least twenty thousand words per minute. Put that together with an eidetic memory, and it was the perfect storm to create someone who did well at learning.

Aaron had no clue why someone with his intelligence and learning accolades wanted to become an FBI agent at all much less agree to work in the Behavioural Analysis Unit. He would make a lot better money in the private sector. Aaron could see though why Gideon was enamored with the
young man. Aaron's friend couldn't get him the entire FBI file on the young man, but there was enough for Aaron to know that Gideon planned to bring the young man into the BAU. Aaron closed the file as he heard talking in the bullpen. He stood up and looked out to see Gideon with a young man. Given the physical description that Aaron had been given, Aaron knew the young man to be Doctor Spencer Reid.

Arriving in the dark of the office had not let Aaron see the changes that had happened overnight. There was a new desk across from where Morgan's was, and it had Reid's name on it. Aaron sighed and sat down. Gideon had to know that he was there and he wondered if the man was going to fess up to what he was doing before he brought Reid to the team or was going to blinds ide Aaron.

When Gideon left with Reid in tow before coming up to Aaron's office, Aaron knew that he was going to be blindsided. Aaron moved to his computer and started to bring up the paperwork needed to protest an assignment to the team. Gideon might be the Unit Chief, but Aaron's opinions had just as much weight as his when it came to the BAU, and especially the BAU's leading team. Gideon was close to burning out, and the upper brass knew it. It was why in the aftermath of Rossi leaving, they had pushed Aaron onto Gideon's team.

There was silence for the rest of the hour before the bulk of the team started to arrive. Morgan was the last in but he always put in his work, Aaron didn't let the fact that he was last ever make him think ill of the man. Morgan did make a beeline for Aaron's office though. He stepped inside and shut the door, giving Aaron a grave look.

"If you are here about the rumors, I've heard them. Hell, I've seen the young man."

"He's a kid. If ever there was someone who I would call a kid, it's him. I heard that he almost failed out of every physical activity, but one of the other cadets took pity on him and started to train with him. He passed but barely on the finals. The only thing that the kid has going for him is the fact that he can shoot."

"I've not heard about his actual scores. Is this from the takedown training you have been doing?"

"Yes," Morgan said as he moved forward to finally sit down. Aaron pushed the file folder across the desk, and Morgan picked it up. Aaron watched the dark-skinned agent as he read it over. "He's bringing an egghead to the team? A twenty-three-year-old kid who probably wouldn't know his ass from a hole in the ground."

"I am going to fight this, Morgan. Don't do anything until Gideon actually brings the kid onto the team. While the academic scope of what Doctor Reid has learned could be valuable, I don't see that he can help us all that much. He would be a liability more than a help."

"What is Gideon thinking?"

"That he's near retirement. He's held on longer than the others in the BAU, and he wants to nurture someone to take his place. I don't know what he sees in the young man, but I will make sure that he gets placed someone more fitting a cadet leaving the academy."

Morgan nodded, but Aaron wasn't sure that the man would actually keep his mouth shut. He was a loose cannon at times. Aaron was good at reining him in when needed.

JJ came up to Aaron's office just as he was getting into a budget review paper that he would rather be saved from. She had an emergent case that needed their team in Indiana.
One Week Later

Aaron stopped in his tracks when he saw someone sitting at the empty desk across from Morgan's spot. There was a pile of books in front of him that was staggering, in volume and the fact that someone had carried them to the sixth floor. Then Aaron realized that they were his law books from his office. Aaron looked up, and he could see that a whole shelf was empty. Aaron started to bristle, but then he saw that Gideon's office light was on. Aaron bypassed the young man, hoping it was Reid and not a new would be protege and went right for Gideon's office.

"Hotch, good. I'm glad you are early."

"Who is that Gideon and why is he reading my law books?"

"He was bored. Don't worry I got them for him. He never set foot in your office. That is Doctor Spencer Reid, the newest member of the team. I'm sure that you will like him."

"Gideon, you can't just shove a new member on the team. You need to talk to the team, and we don't need a young kid on the team."

"So you did hear about him?" Gideon asked. His eyes tracked to the window, and Aaron looked that way. Reid was turned around in the chair and staring up at them. Aaron was sure that the kid had heard every single word that had been said. He didn't care.

"Of course I did. I hoped that someone else would step and stop this. I am going to fight it."

"Do you remember the case not long after you joined the team? The dead Old God?" Gideon asked. Aaron wondered what that had to do with what Gideon was doing.

"Yes."

"Old God killed by a New God because the Old God attacked him in broad daylight?"

"Yes." Aaron looked out at Reid. The young man was staring up at the office, and even though both Gideon and Aaron were talking a lot lower now, he was sure that the young man could hear every word.

"You wrote in your case file that the FBI needed to pick a stance on the Gods because they were not going to go away. In that time we have lured a few New Gods to the FBI but not really in a capacity that they can do much more than a regular human like you and I. When I pushed Reid to the Academy that changed."

"Are you telling me that he's a New God?" Aaron asked.

"God of Psychology. I found him when I was doing a lecture at Caltech. He was there for his Chemistry degree when he fell in love with psychology. Before he turned eighteen he was found to be the New God of Psychology."

"You aren't kidding me, are you? To force me to let him on the team?"

"No. Yesterday he was given seven files by Strauss. He sat in her office and worked on them. He came to the same conclusions that we did in minutes when it took us hours or days. He was only given what we went into the case knowing. The profiles of the UnSubs was perfect."
"No matter if he is a New God, he's not a puppet on a string, Gideon. He's a human."

"He used to be human. He's a God now. He's on the team no matter what. You can take it or leave it."

"Take it or leave it? What the hell does that mean?"

"It means that Reid is on the team. If you don't like it, you can move to another department, the same thing goes for Morgan."

Aaron just stared at Gideon. The man was still one of the best minds for figuring out serial killers and deviant minds but those around him, he had trouble understanding or just didn't care. Aaron had never been able to figure that one out. Gideon was working on some kind of paperwork, so Aaron took it as a dismissal. He turned and left Gideon's office only to find that Reid was no longer at his desk and all of the books were piled on the floor against the wall right beside Aaron's office. Aaron sighed. While he didn't like the new agent being shoved onto his team, he didn't hate him, and he didn't want to be put off the team just because he didn't like the FBI's new shiny toy.

There was only a single agent in the office beside Aaron, and that was Anderson. Anderson was a good agent, but he lacked confidence, so he was kept around as a helper for the SSAs who worked inside of the BAU. He went on cases occasionally but not that often.

"Anderson, the new agent. Where did he go?"

"He went to the stairs, but he didn't go down. He went up."

"Thank you, Anderson. When Morgan gets in, tell him to wait in my office. In fact, it would be better if he and JJ didn't talk to Gideon at all. So just tell them to go in there."

"Yes, Sir." Anderson was a good agent. Aaron relied on him a lot to get things done in the office when the team wasn't there. He helped JJ a lot with her job. Anderson was the reason that the job existed. The media managing on cases had gone beyond what Aaron could handle anymore and throw it in with what Anderson did, and a new person was perfect. Anderson didn't want the job, so they had looked elsewhere. JJ had been the perfect addition.

Aaron found the stairs that Anderson was talking about. It was an internal set that ran from the second floor and up. Aaron went up. There was nothing on the above levels that Aaron thought would hold an interest to the young God. There was, however, a smoking spot on the roof that the stairs had access to. A blind eye was turned to it by security as long as people used their badge to get in and out and didn't just prop the door open. Aaron had never used it, but he had gone up to get alone time sometimes at night when cases were rough and local.

The door was shut, so Aaron held his badge up to have it let him out. He pushed open the door and looked out. He didn't see the young God, but he could smell that someone was smoking. It didn't smell like regular cigarettes though. Still, Aaron shut the door and stepped around, following the smell. He found the young God standing at the corner and looking out on the bulk of the base. Aaron stayed back because he no clue how Reid was going to react to Aaron all of a sudden being there.

"What can I do for you, Agent Hotchner?" Reid asked, not turning around. A cloud of smoke appeared above his head. It was a dark morning, the sun not all the way up. It wasn't cold outside yet. Cool, yes but not cold. Aaron liked weather like that.

"I want to get to know the man that joined my team."

"I'm not a man, not anymore. I'm a God. I know that you know that. I also know that you really don't
care if I am a God or not. Do you want a smoke?" Reid finally turned around and held out a snap case. Aaron saw that the cigarettes were hand rolled. Aaron quirked an eyebrow.

"You are a very educated man, er God. I am shocked that you smoke."

"In the eighteen hundreds the first new God was unearthed, well the first that was made public. He smoked for one hundred years and never got cancer or anything from it. I took up the habit when I was sixteen. Stress-related and peer pressure. I tried to quit, and then I found out I was a God and said that it didn't matter if I quit. Meet interesting people this way too." Reid slipped the case back into his pocket, and Aaron watched him, seeing that he was trying not to move too quickly. Aaron saw that the God had just lit another cigarette. Reid sat down on the edge of the roof and looked up at Aaron.

"Why do you want on this team?"

"Why do I want on it? Really, Agent Hotchner, it's a psychologist's Wonderland."

"This isn't a game."

"Nor did I say it was a game." Reid turned his head to the side and looked at Aaron through the corner of his eye. "What am I supposed to do? I'm a God of Psychology. I don't want to open up a practice and tell people that they need to open up, that they need to talk to everyone around them. I could pick a hospital and become their resident psychologist. I could do a lot of things, but my life was shaped by the path that I was on before I became a God. I saw Gideon and Rossi giving a lecture at Stanford when I was going to my first year at Caltech. It was right before Rossi retired. I had a friend go missing when I was a kid. I want to understand what happened to him and understand the fear that everyone had when it was going on. I went to the Academy, and the word got out about what I was. I was not aware until just a little bit ago that there was opposition to me being on the team."

"The BAU is not a unit that has ever allowed cadets onto it. Hard work pays off for this unit."

"I was not part of the decision making in what happened to get me on the team. I was approached by Gideon, and then I was given my orders two weeks ago for when I graduate. If you want to get mad at someone, take it up with Gideon. I do what I am told just like everyone else." Reid took a long drag from his cigarette and stared at Aaron.

Aaron sighed and rubbed a hand down his face.

"The rest of the team will be here shortly. I think that it will go over better if I introduce you to them and not let Gideon. Morgan is usually right on time for arrival, but sometimes he surprises me. Brannon is usually about a half an hour early. We are still hunting for a technical analyst. JJ is our media liaison, and she usually comes in right after me and is probably trying to get her day started. We can go down and meet her if you want?"

"Or I can go down and start to get oriented and my computer setup. I have a lot that I need to do."

"You also need to meet the team before we are called away on a case. Gideon might have been the one to put you on this team, but you still have to answer to me, New God or not."

"Yes, Sir." Reid stood up and finished off his cigarette in a few puffs. He tossed the butt into a container that was there. It was a clay pot with sand inside of it. Aaron saw that several butts were inside of it. Only two were Reid's. The corner was a favorite spot for smokers. Aaron watched as Reid picked up a messenger bag and a book from the roof. He slung the bag over his head and
tucked the book close to him. Aaron had a bad feeling about all of this because there was no way that this kid was going to last long at all in the FBI much less the BAU, no matter what he was a God of. It wasn't hard to see that he was ready for life much less the near nomadic life that the BAU lived.

"Tomorrow, you and I are going to go over your whole life."

"No, Sir we are not. Everything that the FBI needs to know about my life prior to the Academy was given to them already. If you want more, you can just live with not knowing. Unless you want to do a quid pro quo. I'll gladly tell you the first time I had sex if you tell me yours." Reid didn't even pause as he spoke but instead walked toward the door that led down. He didn't look back at Aaron to make sure that he was following. Aaron glared and hoped that the young God wasn't this willful on cases, there was a lot of LEOs that would make it their job to get him alone and rough him up for a mouth and attitude like that.

Aaron took the stairs at a quicker pace than he usually did and still he didn't meet up with Reid as he went down. Reid was at his desk with the computer booted up and a case file of some kind open. His eyes were scanning over it. Reid didn't look at Aaron at all. Aaron frowned. He wasn't used to someone not treating him with one hundred percent indifference, but then the God in question did hear Aaron's rant to Gideon. Aaron probably would have acted the same if it had been him.

There was movement in Aaron's office, and he saw that JJ, Brannon, and Morgan were all in his office. Aaron gritted his teeth and took the short steps up to the level that his office, as well as Gideon's and the roundtable room, were on. Aaron pinched the bridge of his nose as he entered his office and this time he shut the door.

"Anderson said that something big was up and we needed to wait in here and not talk to Gideon. Hotch, what's up?" Morgan asked.

"The new agent for the team is here."

"Gideon's little pet?" Morgan asked.

"Please, don't call him that to his face."

"I thought you were going to fight this."

"He can't," JJ said. She had in her hand a file. She handed it over to Aaron before she took a seat on the couch. Brannon sat down in the chair, and Morgan stayed standing.

Aaron opened the file and saw that it wasn't a case file. It was a handwritten note from Reid to JJ.

"That was on my desk this morning. He has very nice penmanship. Doctor Spencer Reid, he signed the letter. It was a request to get all case files printed out for him instead of a download to his computer. He also explains the reasoning behind it."

"Don't worry about it, he's not going to be here long," Morgan said.

"No, he is," Aaron said, and he waited for the blow-up, but Morgan just looked at him in shock. Brannon was looking at Aaron in shock as well, but he was doing better at covering it. JJ looked indifferent. "His placement on the team comes from high up. I guess that they don't want one of the New Gods being stuck in a dead end job."

"He's a New God?" Morgan demanded.
"God of Psychology. All we have to do is make sure that he's not hurt and given some time they will realize that he's not a fit for the team and will put him into a place that he will do good in but Morgan you can't go through and make it so that he wants to leave."

"He's a New God?" Morgan repeated. JJ gave him a look that said that she wanted to laugh but she didn't. "New Gods are targets. There is a reason that all of them are kept based out of a single location. Every single LEO we meet is going to have an issue with a New God being on the team. You know that."

"Religious people have never taken to the New Gods or the Old Gods, but there is no law about reporting it. We don't have to tell them. I hope that there is a Code of Conduct wrote for dealing with what happens when a LEO does find out, but we will probably have to make it up as we go, Morgan. Be prepared for that." Aaron looked out into the bullpen to see the young God sitting at the computer and typing away at something as he lifted a cup of what looked like coffee up to take a sip. "We always do lunch out with the newest member of the team. Why don't we just try and be nice?"

"I'm looking forward to meeting him," Brannon said with a smile on his face. "And I am sure that if Morgan has a problem we can ask him and Anderson to switch. How long has he been a God?"

"I haven't asked that question yet. I was trying to feel him out."

"Reid didn't tell me what he wanted to be called. So I would go with no, but then I am his boss, so I have no clue. I won't let him though. He'll be called Reid. Do you have any cases that are going to become a high priority over the next few days? I'd rather not have one if we don't have to. You know that Gideon is going to want to take his new toy out and play with him and see if the payoff is enough." Aaron turned to look at JJ who was still looking solemn, but there was a look of mischief in her eyes.

"No, there is nothing. Just a lot of long distance consults. Not a lot have the makings to send us out to them unless things change drastically. There is one that might but so far no."

"Good. JJ, go introduce yourself to him and then Morgan and Brannon."

Aaron opened his office door and ushered the members of the team out. He shut the door once Morgan was out, but he moved to the window to look outside. He watched as JJ walked up to Reid and stuck her hand out to shake, but Reid just waved at her. Morgan looked up at Aaron with a look of "are you kidding me" on his face and Aaron wondered at why the man didn't want to shake hands. He waved at Brannon and Morgan when it was their turns to be introduced. Lunch would be a good time to get to know what the team really thought of Reid. Gideon never went out with them like that and Aaron was kind of glad about that. It gave them all a chance to relax without Gideon profiling them. There was a moratorium on inter-team profiling, but Gideon never followed it.

There was too much time between the time and when lunch was for Aaron to not get something done for the day. He left his office door closed if someone really needed something they would knock and wait for him to call them in. JJ was the only one that did it regularly. It was a nice buffer.

A thought came to Aaron as he was filling out the intake paperwork on Reid that Strauss wanted to see him out of the BAU. The woman had no business the Section Chief of the BAU still she was there and tried to keep Aaron down where he knew that he answered to her. Aaron hated her guts, but he kept it more professional than she did. He knew that he just needed to toe the line and all would come out. Thankfully, she had not gone on a case with the team yet. He had a feeling that
when it happened, it would not go well at all.

Lunchtime rolled around, and Aaron only opened his office door when the clock ticked to noon. Reid was buried with stacks of files around him, reading them it seemed. Aaron watched as the young God read page after page, second after second. No wonder he wanted all files printed for him.

"Lunchtime, Hotch?" Brannon called out from his seat. Anderson looked up to and gave Hotch a smile before going back to what he was working on. Aaron would rather have Anderson on the team than Reid. He would rather see Reid in Anderson's job, but that wasn't what he was given. Instead, he had a New God that Aaron was pretty sure a stiff wind would knock down.

"Yes, Reid you are with us."

"Thanks but I brought my lunch." Reid never even looked up as he said it. He just kept reading the files in front of him. Aaron looked at JJ, frowning.

"We do lunch out for the newest member of the team," JJ pointed out. Reid finished reading the file that he had been flipping through before he looked at JJ who was standing outside of her office. She looked at Aaron for support. No one had ever declined the meal out. Of course, it was just JJ, Morgan, and Brannon that had been a part of that. Aaron had barely got a welcome from Gideon when he had joined the team. Rossi had taken him out for a meal where Aaron had been a little shocked at how much the man flirted with every single woman that breathed in his direction.

"Oh. Well...I guess I can save my lunch for tomorrow." Reid seemed to deflate a little bit as he settled his pile of reading files away from him and scooted back in his chair.

"I'll take care of your files, Doctor Reid. I'll even bring up some new ones," Anderson offered.

"Oh, thanks." Reid stood up and ducked down to grab his messenger bag. Aaron frowned as the young God looped it over his head and started toward the stairs down. He didn't get into the elevator. JJ looked at Aaron again as the door shut on the stairs.

"Yeah, this is going to go over real well," Morgan said under his breath.

"I'll drive Reid and me in. Morgan, you take Brannon and JJ. I'll find out where Reid wants to eat and text you, JJ."

"Okay, Hotch," JJ said as she went back to her office to grab her purse.

Aaron walked to the elevator, not shocked that Morgan and Brannon didn't join them. Aaron wondered at what was up with Reid. He had been so different on the rooftop. In fact, Aaron kind of expected him to put his foot down about going out. Aaron wondered if it had to do with the fact that he had been kind of pissed off on the roof.

Reid was waiting beside Aaron's car and that kind of shocked Aaron, as far as he knew Reid had not seen him drive in that morning. He looked at the young God and saw that he was nose deep in a book. He didn't look up from it at all, in fact as Aaron unlocked the car and got in. It was only after Aaron had pulled his door shut that Reid even opened the passenger door on the car and sat down.

"What do you like to eat?"

"I like Chinese, but there are not places that I like to eat it from near here. There is the Mexican restaurant that I like well enough a few blocks inside of the City of Quantico, but it's closed. I heard Morgan state that he doesn't like the diner that is in town, so I guess that I'll settle for the Chinese restaurant as anything else is fast food and I don't like to eat it."
"Morgan will eat at the diner. He doesn't like it because the waitresses there all are impervious to his charms."

Reid shrugged before he slipped his book into his bag and finally buckled up.

"But making him go to a place that he doesn't like will make his dislike me more than he already does."

"Morgan doesn't dislike you," Aaron said, but he knew from the look that Reid gave him that Reid knew that he was lying.

"The Chinese place is fine with me."

"Reid," Aaron said, but Reid didn't turn to look at him. In fact, he seemed to deflate in the seat of the car. Aaron pulled out his cell phone and texted JJ where to meet. He was half tempted to tell her the diner, but he didn't think that he could deal with Morgan and Reid being upset. Aaron took the slower roads to the Chinese restaurant. It was open twenty-four hours and would deliver to the gate of the base if agents or marines wanted. It was a good place, and Aaron wondered why Reid didn't like it. It was a favorite among the base personnel.

There were thankfully few cars in the parking lot; hopefully, that meant that Aaron could sweet talk the waitress into giving them the room that was reserved for larger parties. However, a look at the side parking lot when Aaron parked told him that Morgan had beat them. Aaron got out and waited for Reid to open his door and get out before he shut his door. Aaron watched the young God move into the restaurant, and he frowned. It was like he had changed personalities. Aaron really hoped it wasn't an aspect of Reid being the God of Psychology. He did not need a bipolar agent on the team.

"Agent Hotchner!" the hostess exclaimed. She smiled at Aaron and pointed toward the room. Aaron figured that JJ had the same thought as him and he was very thankful.

"Thanks!"

"May I get your drinks?"

"Water please," Reid said before he walked toward the room. Aaron frowned at the man's back.

"Sweet tea, no lemon."

Morgan was seated between Brannon and JJ on one side of a ten seater table that stretched across the middle of the room. Reid took a seat in the chair that was one over and across from JJ, meaning that he had no one on the other side of him. JJ scooted the menu over to him that been placed at the seat across from her, but he didn't take it. Instead, he just ignored it, staring straight ahead. Aaron felt his frown deepen.

"So where did you grow up, Reid?" Brannon asked.

"Las Vegas born and lived there for the first twelve years before I moved to student housing in Pasadena. Lived there until I moved to DC before I started at the Academy."

"That's it?" Morgan asked.

Reid actually looked up Morgan then. "What do you mean?"

"You can count the places you have lived on one hand. Three houses."
"No. One house, one dorm room, and one apartment."

The waitress came in and set down a plate of appetizers. Aaron watched as Reid looked at them before shaking his head no. Aaron quirked an eyebrow at JJ.

"Good thing about Morgan driving. I knew we would get here first but still, I called in to make sure the room was open and I ordered the sampler platter of appetizers." JJ was the peacekeeper of the team. Except when it came to Gideon because that was Aaron's job. Aaron looked at the posture of the team. Reid's was closed off and uninviting, but it had only got that way after Morgan had asked his question. Aaron thought about how it must feel to Reid to be on a team that didn't want him and know it by the words that they chose, the way that they talked, and the way that they moved. Aaron cursed himself because this wasn't going to go well, no matter how much Aaron acted like he wanted Reid on the team, the truth was that he didn't, and Reid would know it.
Chapter 2

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

*Humans live and die on their hubris. I've met few that don't depend on their pride to get them through the day. Then again I don't mingle with the gentry much, their lives are not as fun. It's the same thing over and over again. It's only been in the time post the Industrial Revolution that the gentry lives have become something to keep me entertained. Still, there are those that are prideful, and sometimes I like watching them burn by their own pride and see what they do to escape the consequences. Sometimes I help them along.*

January 2005

Aaron frowned at Reid as he entered the bullpen. The young God had moved desks again. It had not taken long for him to move from sitting in front of Morgan to sitting in front of Brannon, however that didn't last long either. Yesterday, Reid had been sitting across from Anderson who had talked Brannon into swapping with him. Aaron liked it when his team was together. Aaron stopped though when he saw that Reid's things were still at the desk across from Anderson. Reid had taken over a desk that was huge and shared between two BAU agents from the secondary team. He was hard at work, looking over seven different case files that were scattered across the top of the desk and eight different books. Aaron almost stopped and went over to him but Aaron's morning was going to be hard enough as it was.

The newest member of the team was due to arrive that morning. The BAU needed a better technical analyst than who they had. The rotating set of men and women who helped them were good, but they weren't great. So when Aaron had seen that the Black Queen had been caught and no one knew quite what to do with her, Aaron had put in his thoughts. He and Morgan had been the ones to recruit her. Gideon wouldn't care at all about having a full-time analyst for the BAU. He wouldn't care that it was a female. He only cared that she showed him deference that he felt he was due and she didn't bug him.

Aaron laughed to himself because he was pretty sure that Penelope Garcia was going to bug Gideon just by breathing. Aaron though wanted her for two reasons. When she dropped the Black Queen act, which she had when she had been flying with Aaron and Morgan back to DC after closing up her apartment and getting everything shipped to DC, Garcia was a breath of fresh air. Aaron worried about dropping her into the things that they did. He had given her two hundred dollars of his own money to get decorations for her room that would make her smile. Aaron had not been kind when he had shown her what she would be working with, seeing on a daily basis.

"Reid, remember that Garcia will be arriving today."

"Yes, yes. I didn't bring lunch so I could 'bond' with the team." Reid didn't even look up as he spoke. Aaron wanted to go over and see what case he was working on but he stopped himself. Reid was where he was for a reason. It was the only desk space that had no walking room behind it. Whatever he was working on he wanted no one to be able to walk up behind him.

Adjusting to the team was a hard thing for Reid to do. JJ tried her hardest to include him in everything, including a dinner out with her and some of the other agents that were not BAU that JJ had gone through the Academy with but he rebuffed her at every single turn. Morgan was nice but not inviting, and Brannon tried his hardest to make Morgan make nice, but there was little to be done for the bullheaded agent. Aaron tried to get Morgan to open up with what was bothering him about
the New God being on the team. Morgan had told Aaron to leave it alone. Getting Morgan to trust was hard, and even after a few years on the team, he still didn't trust the team with anything genuinely personal.

Aaron wondered if it was because he and Gideon were so quiet. For Aaron his personal life was personal, but he also didn't let it affect his working life. He didn't bring his personal issues to work, and he tried not to bring his work issues into his personal life. Sometimes cases were tough to shake. Walking to his office, Aaron laid down his briefcase and settled into his office chair. He used to be the first one in, but Reid always beat him in. Even when Aaron couldn't sleep so he would come in just to be doing something, which included a three a.m. come in time, Reid was already there.

Reid was known for three things in the office, always being there, having a cup of coffee in his hand or on his desk, and bringing his own food. There were Tupperware containers in the fridge all the time labeled with his name and what meal it was. A timer went off from his phone all the time, and whenever it did, he would eat something. Whether it was a meal from the fridge or a snack bar or even a bar of chocolate. JJ had even gotten a treat of a chocolate bar one day. So far, she was the only one that he had shared food with.

There were days that the reheating of Reid's lunch or dinner made the entire floor smell like it was in the middle of a restaurant. The spices used by him were mouthwatering. Aaron had never smelled a lot of the foods that Reid ate before and Anderson asking him what they were was the only reason that Aaron even knew what they were. It was nice, knowing that Reid's palate was expansive, even if nothing else in his life was.

Aaron was half tempted to get into Reid's file and check to see if he had a place of residence. Aaron was sure that he lived in the unit. A lot of new agents did it, trying to show that they were capable but Reid's time of it had gone on longer than usual, and Aaron was afraid of him burning out.

"That new girl is today right?" Gideon asked as he popped his head into Aaron's office.

"Yes."

"Good. I have a thing that I need her to look up."

"The other analysts refusing to do it for you?"

"I can't get them to call me back. I even went to their offices, and no one was there."

"Unless there is a case that is active, the BAU does not have an active analyst at this moment. None of them have to do a thing for you. And before you get Garcia working on your side projects, give her a week to get settled in."

"Yeah, yeah, okay." Gideon popped back out of Aaron's office and disappeared. They had got back early the day before from a case, and Aaron already wanted another to pop up. Haley had been late on her period and had got her hopes up that she was finally pregnant but when it had started last night, she had been sullen. They had only been trying for the past six months, that really wasn't that long of a time. She had not got out of bed that morning, and it was why Aaron didn't want to go home that night.

"Hotch, we have a possible case. Atlanta PD is faxing me all of the information, but Strauss won't greenlight us to go until afternoon. So if we plan it right, we can go from the restaurant to the airfield."

"Garcia likes Mexican food so please call ahead a reservation. Let Reid know that we might not be
eating at the normal time so he can slip in another snack."

"I found another chocolate bar on my desk." JJ looked out into the bullpen and back at Hotch before she stepped into the room. "I found out that he left a chocolate bar for Susana last week."

"Susana?"

"The night custodian. I figured out the first time what it was."

"And what was it?" Aaron asked. He hoped it wasn't a sexually based gesture. He did not need to send the young God to sensitivity training. Aaron looked at JJ's face when she said nothing. She was giving him a look. It had been almost a month since the first candy bar. "Oh."

"Yeah. My favorite candy bar too. Susana is allergic to milk, so her bar was milk free. She asked me about it because it was pretty much the talk of the office when Reid did it the first time. I'm looking forward to seeing if he does it with Garcia."

"Are you okay handling her intake? She's a little afraid of me, and I'd rather have her not be nervous the entire time."

"Yes, it's fine. I wouldn't mind doing it for the new members as they come in. I hope we aren't getting any more for a while."

"I don't think that the budget for more would be approved. Garcia will work with all of the teams not just ours but I am sure that we will take up more of her time. If you need anything just let me know."

"I always do Hotch. I'll send a text of the time for lunch. Do you want everyone to drive since we are probably going straight to the airfield?"

"No. We can take two, and when we get back, it's not hard to drive to the lot where we park to drop off the other members if it's late, or early."

JJ left Aaron alone then and the rest of the morning flew by in paperwork. Reid's files for the case were already on Aaron's desk, and if it weren't for the fact that he was used to it, he would be shocked. There was little that Reid didn't do as soon as he could. Morgan had tried to give him paperwork of his once, but it had appeared back in Morgan's stack. Aaron had heard about it at lunch that day.

Lunchtime rolled around, and Aaron left his office with everything that he would need for the case. Reid was waiting at the steps with his go-bag in hand. Aaron shook his head and smiled a little.

"Lunchtime. We will go over the case on the jet," Aaron said to the room at large. Those who were not his team ignored him while his team, minus Reid and Gideon scrambled to get ready. Aaron looked into Gideon's office but found him gone. Aaron shrugged and looked at JJ. She nodded to his unanswered question of if Gideon knew their departure time. Maintaining Gideon's calendar was something that JJ and Aaron split. JJ had taken on more and more of it as she had got used to her job over the year she had been at it. Aaron was glad because Gideon was better on track.

When Aaron exited to where his car was, he saw Reid standing at the passenger side door. His nose was buried in a book, and he was lost in his own world.

"Ready?" Aaron said, not shocked that Reid was the only taker on riding with him. Garcia would probably drive herself so that she had a way back. JJ and Brannon would ride with Morgan. Every time that they drove anywhere and Reid had to go, Aaron was alone with him. Aaron wasn't sure if it was the team not wanting to be with him or Reid not being as forthcoming as the others. Aaron got
inside of the car and found that Reid was already inside.

Aaron didn't speak at all as he drove to the Mexican restaurant. The roads were empty as it was after the regular lunch time. Aaron looked at Reid out of the corner of his eye, the young God wasn't reading which was odd. Usually, he had a book of some kind in his hand if he wasn't working.

Pulling into the lot, Aaron saw that Morgan had already parked and was inside. Reid waited for Aaron to get out of the car for once and didn't take off as soon as Aaron got out. In fact, Reid let Aaron go inside first. Aaron went right for the room that was off to the side. He could hear Morgan and Garcia laughing. Aaron stopped, and Reid ran right into him. Garcia was dressed like a rainbow peacock. There were no other words to describe her. She was full of colors, and while the cut of the clothes was tasteful enough for work, the colors were not wholly within the standards for the Agency. Aaron didn't care and had already made sure that she would not get in trouble with it. She wouldn't go with the team on cases, and if she did, Aaron would make sure she was toned down. If her outfits and her toys were what got her through the job she agreed to do, he would allow it.

Aaron pulled his phone free and opened the note-taking application, making a note to talk to HR about the policy for the on-site analysts that were not in the field. Aaron really wanted to make sure that all analysts could dress as they saw fit. Reid backed up and walked around Aaron to take the seat furthest from the rest of the team. Aaron watched him look at the menu for the restaurant quickly, his eyes scanning it all before he closed it and pushed it back. His eyes locked onto the wall that was between the other end of the table. Aaron took a seat that was between where the team was and where Reid was. Every meal that the team ate together was the same. Garcia looked around the table at everyone before she looked at Reid.

"Hi, my name is Penelope Garcia. I met everyone else on the team this morning, but JJ said that you were in the zone, so I didn't want to bother you." Garcia stood up from where she was sitting, and she started toward Reid but Reid locked eyes with her, and she stopped moving.

"Hello, Miss Penelope Garcia. My name is Spencer Reid." Reid continued to stare at her, but with the angle that he was at, Aaron couldn't tell what was on his face. He watched though as Garcia seemed to deflate a little before she sat back down.

The conversation around the table was stilted for a few minutes between the interaction between Garcia and Reid and the arrival of the waitress to take their food and drink order. Reid ordered the standard water that he did when they ate out, and it wasn't breakfast and the beef fajitas. Aaron ordered his typical chicken fajitas. When they were on cases, he usually ordered nachos of some kind because those were easy to eat but when he was eating, and it was a laid-back time, he got fajitas. Garcia flirted with Morgan the entire meal and Morgan gave it right back. Reid watched the two of them like they were the most interesting thing that he had ever come across and Aaron almost reminded them that they were in the presence of a New God, the God of Psychology at that, but he didn't. Morgan, Aaron was sure, never forgot it and Aaron wasn't sure what JJ had told Garcia about Reid.

"Garcia," Aaron asked as he swallowed the last bite of his final fajita. Reid had eaten all three of his and finished off the rest of the meat and vegetables, including the tomatoes. Aaron liked the flavor that they gave the food, but he did not like to eat them. Reid's eyes kept on tracking to Aaron's skillet that had plenty of vegetables left as well as some scraps of chicken on it. Aaron pushed it over toward the young God and smiled when Reid pulled it closer to himself. A dart up his eyes and when Aaron nodded, Reid pulled it in front of him. JJ passed down the basket of chips that the waitress had delivered halfway through them eating as well as the new cup of salsa. Aaron took them and set them in front of Reid as well. Reid looked up and gave Aaron a brief smile, the first real
smile that he had seen on the young God's face.

"Sir?" Garcia asked when Aaron didn't offer anything up to her after calling out her name.

"We have a case that we will probably need your help on we will be flying straight out there after we leave here. I would like you to get some sleep tonight so there are rooms that you can bunk down in. If it gets too late, please don't hesitate to bunk down there or if you must go home, there is a service that takes non-field rated agents home when casework demands it. I have used it when I am too tired to drive or too injured so don't feel bad about using it."

"I used it two weeks, five days, and twelve hours ago," Reid offered.

Aaron turned to look at him. It was the first time that Reid had offered anything that wasn't case related without being prompted. Reid didn't look up from where he was picking out all the bits of chicken from Aaron's plate and pushing them into a pile. Aaron was mesmerized by how well he did as it and wondering why. He had seen Reid eat chicken before. Until Aaron watched him take the last little bit of cheese that Reid had asked for and dumped it on the chicken. Reid moved to start eating the vegetables as the cheese started to warm up and melt a little from the still very hot skillet.

"I won't, Sir but I have no problem bunking down in the room."

"It's the same time zone, so that will help but don't push yourself."

"Sir, I'm used to staying up over a day to get a hack done just right. I'll be fine as long as I keep myself fueled by caffeine and food and I made sure to bring with me today. You told me that I would be needed to stay on my toes."

Aaron smiled at Garcia and turned back to his last little bit of rice and beans, scooping them both up onto his fork and eating them. He glanced at the skillet that had been his and saw that it was empty. It looked like nothing had been on it except for the oil and the charred bits of food. Reid was working on eating the chips. If it weren't for the fact that Aaron had seen Reid eat more at two a.m. after finishing up a nerve-wracking case that had stopped the team from eating nearly that whole day beside chips and cookies, Aaron would have felt sick. He wasn't sure if it was an aspect of Reid and his Godness that allowed him to eat that much or if it was a byproduct of him just being a God, that he needed to eat a lot. Either way, he was the envy of the women who watched him eat because never put on a single pound by the look of him.

"Wheels up!" Aaron said when Reid ate the last chip, and the conversation of the team had died down.

**March 2005**

"Why do you even fucking work with a team if you don't take into account their thoughts?" Reid demanded of the devastated Gideon. Aaron had never heard that tone from the young God, even when Morgan and Anderson joking around in the office had knocked into Reid's desk and knocked over his coffee all over a set of maps that Brannon had printed out for Reid. It had been after hours, but Reid had been distraught. It was the only time that Morgan had interacted with the young God and it didn't seem forced.

Gideon looked up at Reid with such shock on his face that Aaron wasn't sure what was going to happen.

"I took your words into account."
"And you dismissed them because? You are the one who came to me, Jason Gideon and you told me about the good that I could do with what I had been given. YOU told me that I would do more good helping your team than I could do if I worked in a hospital. You talked me into this." Reid disengaged from where he had been standing over top of Gideon who was on the floor and minutes before had been sitting with his head in his hands.

Aaron was numb. Aaron had been numb since Gideon had done precisely what Reid had told him not to do. The BAU was taught that the deaths that the UnSubs that they caught did were not on their hands. That not getting there in time wasn't blood on their hands, but today, there was blood on all of their hands. Aaron should have stopped Gideon when a member of the team disagreed with what Gideon had said. There had been nothing though. Instead, Aaron had believed what he could no longer believe, Gideon wasn't infallible.

There were six dead on Gideon's hands, and Aaron could feel the blood on his own hands.

Reid stopped at the doorway to the room that the team had gone into for the purpose of gathering their wits. He looked at Gideon until the man finally looked up at him.

"I won't wear the shame of this, Jason Gideon. Dean's blood is on your hands." Reid left without another word. There was only silence in the room, and Aaron didn't know what to do.

JJ was the first to leave, her phone in her hand and she was texting. Aaron knew that he should have followed her, but he couldn't get his limbs to move. Morgan was the next. Either because he couldn't take being in the room with Gideon or he couldn't face his own thoughts. Gideon was next, but Aaron looked up at him as he did. Gideon stopped at the door to the room and turned around to say something but stopped himself. He shook his head and left without a word. Aaron sat there in that room until dusk started to fall. The ringing of a phone had Aaron reaching out for it.

"Hotchner," Aaron said, but even his voice sounded dead to his own ears.

"Hotch?" JJ sounded very confused. Aaron pulled the phone away and realized that it was Reid's. Reid had left his phone behind in the room. "I thought I called Reid's phone."

"You did. It's in the office here." Aaron looked around and realized that no one had even turned on the light. Hell, no one probably realized that he was in there. There was just the light from the window behind Aaron making anything visible in the room. "What did you need from him?"

"No one has seen him since he left the office. Gideon is already gone. Strauss is up my ass to get the team back to DC, and I can't do that without figuring out where everyone is."

"Where is Gideon?"

"He called Strauss and stated that he was taking a leave of absence to not worry about him getting home from Boston. He's taking a public flight home and will submit all the necessary forms in the right time. I tried to call him, but his phone isn't accepting calls so he either turned it off or he has it off for the flight. Morgan is in the room that the agents use to let off steam. It's got a punching bag. I know you are still in the room, but no one has seen Reid."

"I'll find him. Get snacks for the jet for him. He went through his stash that he brought with him. Is the jet ready?"

"Yes. Once we all get on it, we have priority clearance to leave. Strauss will handle the detaining of Bale."

"I want you to handle Brannon's memorial and making sure that his parents get everything."
"I'm already on it. I have the necessary things for all of it for all members of the team on file. I never thought that I would need them. God. I need to go. I'll get snacks for Reid and make sure that Morgan and I get to the jet." JJ hung up without saying goodbye, a first for her. Aaron pressed his head into his hand that was wrapped around the phone for a few minutes before he stood up. He straightened his suit and made sure that he looked impeccable before he turned the light on. There was nothing left in the room. JJ and Morgan had taken care of that before they had all turned silent. The only thing that was left was Reid's cell phone. Aaron looked around for his bag because he knew that Reid hadn't taken it with him. He hoped it was with their go bags which had been packed into the SUV's before they had left the hotel that morning. Gideon had wanted to move hotels to one closer to the new zone that they were sure that Bale was working out of. It helped to make sure that they were ready to leave.

Aaron didn't know why Strauss had wanted them pulled out before everything was fully closed. In cases like this, their initial reports were done the first time, before they left but she wasn't exactly the best for doing things like they should be done, the way that they had been crafted to work the best. Aaron knew that Strauss didn't like for bad things to happen on her watch, but there were things that couldn't be controlled. Aaron wondered who the fallout was going to land at this time. The last time something like this had happened, two agents other than Strauss had taken the fall. Aaron wasn't going to allow it to be him and he knew that it made him an asshole.

Shutting off the light, Aaron exited the room. He walked to the elevator to exit the building. He was sure that Reid wasn't inside of it. Aaron walked around the outside of the building and found a small group of agents in a smoking area. Aaron looked around and saw that Reid wasn't with them. He looked up the building.

"Is there roof access?"

"Yes but the door is locked, and only maintenance has a key," one of the Agents said, but Aaron didn't care. He ran back inside and found the stairs. He made his way up them, hoping to catch Reid on his way down. Reid wasn't on the stairs anywhere. Aaron almost turned around when he hit the top landing, but something made him stop. He looked at the doorknob and saw that there was something sticking out of it. Aaron tried the knob, and it turned. Aaron stepped out onto the roof to see that it was well maintained. There was no leaf debris anywhere. Aaron looked around but didn't see Reid anywhere. He almost turned to leave, but he saw a cloud of smoke appear above some kind of shed.

Aaron walked with enough sound that Reid wouldn't be shocked for him to appear near him. Reid was not facing out like he had been the last time that Aaron found him but instead was sitting on the ground, leaning against the edge of the roof and looking at Aaron as he came around the shed.

"Yes?" Reid asked.

"JJ's got the jet ready, it's just waiting on us."

"I don't think it will be a good idea for me to get on the jet with Gideon at the moment."

"Gideon is already on his way back to DC on a commercial flight. Strauss wants us back now."

Reid looked away from Aaron and out into the darkening sky. It was a dismissal, but Aaron didn't leave. Aaron wasn't sure what emotion this was on Reid's face, but Aaron didn't want to ever see it again.

"You told Gideon not to make a decision without talking it out first. Without listening first. You gave him three good reasons why Bale was lying, and he ignored you."
"You let him." Reid looked at Aaron again, and his anger was almost so tangible that Aaron could taste it. Aaron wasn't sure that he wanted to get onto a jet with him.

"Reid."

"No. Don't Reid me. I gave three damned good reasons that were more valid than his reason why he thought that Bale was telling the truth." Reid raised his cigarette up and took a deep pull on it. He let the smoke out in a cloud that covered his face and made it impossible for Aaron to see him.

Aaron heard a skittering, and he turned to look, but there was nothing there. It wasn't a bird, it was moving too fast for a bird to be running on the rooftop. Aaron turned back to Reid to see him there with a little...thing in his hand.

"What is that?"

"Just as a belief in Gods created the New Gods, there are so many things that go bump in the night that exist just because enough humans believe in them. We see them more because we are all created the same. This is an American Pixie. Shaped by the travelers who created this land mixed with the natives who already lived here."

"Is she, he harmful?" Aaron asked as he crouched at Reid's feet. It jumped from Reid's hand to the edge of the roof like it was scared of Aaron.

"No more than any other animal who comes up against someone who is many times their size. Treat him with respect, and he won't hurt you. There was a family of them living in the building that Bale blew up. He's the only survivor. I found him when Gideon was trying to save Brannon."

Reid held out his hand a little more, and the Pixie jumped into it. Aaron saw that one of its wings was damaged. "I'll take him home with me, and he'll find a nice niche in my garden."

"Garden, you live in an apartment."

"I paid extra for access to the roof and made a garden up there. I'm one of the nicer New Gods."

"You're nice?" Aaron asked, and that smile came back on Reid's face. "What's his name?"

"He's not told me yet. I'm sure that he will tell me on the way home."

"The Jet's not cleared for taking creatures home."

"I think you'll find that New Gods attract all kinds creatures. My contract with the FBI allows for certain, non-dangerous ones to be brought home."

"And who makes the decision on how dangerous?" Aaron asked.

"Well, I'll tell you what I know about them, and you can decide."

The Pixie crawled up Reid's arm and settle on his shoulder. The Pixie looked at Aaron before leaning into Reid's ear.

"He says that you smell like peaches. He really likes peaches, so that is his name."

"What language does he speak?" Aaron asked, looking at Peaches the Pixie.

"American English. What else?"
"You seem calmer."

"No, I'm hiding my anger better. I think that I'll be ready to head home. I need to get food though."

"JJ's getting you snacks. We are going to be spending days going over every single second of this from the moment we landed until Gideon ignored you. Get your thoughts together. Don't give them a reason to throw you over the coals as well."

"I won't."

Aaron pushed himself up out of his crouch, and he reached out a hand to offer to Reid. Reid looked at the hand and looked at Peaches before he took it. Aaron pulled Reid up, finding that Reid didn't really need the help, but he had taken what Aaron had offered. Aaron wasn't sure what he felt about that.
From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Humans cling to those things that they find comfort in. A story that comforts them at night to get rid of the things that go bump in the night. A blanket that they sleep with or wrap around themselves when they are sad. There are even those that cling to something that hurts them out of a sense of comfort. The known is better than the unknown. The unknown is just that unknown. The known is a comfort and a blessing, and it hurts the worst when it betrays. Humans though still find someone else, something else to blame. Because how is it their fault for clinging to what they know and rejecting the things that they don't know.

September 2005

Aaron knew exactly where to find Reid when he needed him, and it was after hours. Aaron had never been as angry at the young God as he was now. Aaron had submitted the assessment of Gideon just before he went home to Haley. Haley wasn't happy that he was going back into work even though he told it would only be for an hour or so. Reid's desk had been empty when Aaron had come in, but there was a cup of coffee on the desk that was still very warm which meant that he was there. So Aaron got into the elevator to head up to the twelfth floor. Aaron was not interested in going up six flights of stairs and then the final to the roof.

The door wasn't propped open, so that meant that he didn't want to be disturbed, or he didn't want someone to interrupt him and Aaron while they talked. Aaron shoved the door open and looked around. The times that he had come up to find Reid on the roof, Reid was never in the same place. In this case, Reid was sitting on the edge of the roof with his legs dangling over the side. Aaron stayed back, not wanting to scare Reid. He wasn't sure if a New God would survive a fall down the twelve stories down.

"I'm guessing that someone called you?"

"You don't guess when it comes to things like this, Reid."

"No, no I don't." Reid didn't turn around. Instead, he just stared at out at the night sky. "Did you drive in?"

"Yes."

"Good. Mind if I get a lift home? I've misplaced the keys to my car inside of my apartment."

"You've misplaced the keys to your car inside of your apartment? How do you plan to get in and out of your apartment?"

"I have an alarm, and it's well known that a God lives there. I don't have to worry so much about locking my door." Reid stood up and dropped his cigarette into the ashtray pot that was right in the area he was at. Aaron realized that Reid had distracted him from the whole point of him marching up to the roof in anger. Reid walked past Aaron with a small smile on his face. He stopped just a few feet behind him. Aaron turned around and saw that Reid's eyes were on the sky above. The stars were just visible.

"Why do you come up here?" Aaron asked.
Reid stayed staring up at the night sky. His body was still, and if it weren't for the slight rise and fall of his chest, Aaron would have thought he wasn't even breathing.

"I like the night. The world is calm, and it's like humanity is taking a deep breath before an exhale."

Aaron didn't want to break the silence that came after as they made their way down to the twelfth-floor landing. However, instead of going down, Reid went to the door. He turned back to look at Aaron, and that look that he gave was a beckoning look Aaron followed him all the way into the elevator. Reid never took them. Aaron had never asked why. Gods had quirks, Aaron knew that. He had been one of the ones in the BAU to interview New Gods that had popped up in and around the DC area. The BAU was one of the top knowledge cases for New Gods. But just like the Greek Gods of old, there were no two Gods that were alike.

Reid walked through every door first and even went right for his desk with Aaron following behind. Reid chugged the coffee in his mug and grabbed his messenger bag before he dug around in it and grabbed out his credentials. Inside of the building, Reid only needed his ID badge to do things. Aaron though had never realized that he didn't carry the credentials on him though. Reid turned around and waved for Aaron to go first. Aaron stepped toward the elevators, but he stopped when he touched the button to call it back. Reid reached around him and pressed the button. Aaron could feel the young God's warmth at his back.

Aaron said nothing, not wanting to break whatever they had going. Aaron drove, watching Reid looking at everything like he was seeing it for the first time.

As they hit the edge of DC, Aaron heard a weird noise. He looked over at Reid to see him looking at his stomach and patting it.

"Hungry?" Aaron asked.

"Always. You can drop me at a Chinese restaurant that's close to my apartment."

"I could eat something," Aaron ventured because he could still feel the anger in his gut and he would instead get it over with than let it fester more. This team didn't need anything else to happen.

"Really?" Reid looked excited. He turned in his seat to where he was sort of facing Aaron. "Do you want to eat it there or take it someplace."

"And where would we take it at midnight, Reid?"

"The roof of my apartment. It's where I eat all of my meals when I am home."

"Is Peaches there?" Aaron asked because as much as the Pixie weirded Aaron out, he had only seen him once since Boston. The guy had stowed away in Reid's bag when they had gone on a case to Maryland. The team had driven that time, so when a Pixie had appeared in the backseat between Morgan and JJ's head, Aaron had been shocked. Peaches had lived in Aaron's jacket for the entire case. It hadn't taken long for Aaron to get used to having something living in his coat. Then bereft after when Peaches was no longer there.

"Yes, Peaches is there. He doesn't stray too far from my apartment unless he is trying to get into my bag again. Strauss wasn't happy about finding out that he had stowed away or that you had allowed it."

"That's why she talked to you?" Aaron asked.

"That and she wanted to go over again what happened with Bale. I don't know what more she wants
from me. If it weren't for the fact that I know she dislikes Gideon, I would say that she wants me to incriminate myself to make it so that she can bring him back."

"What did you say? The Director called me at home and told me that Gideon was going to be offered a full-time position at the Academy and that effective immediately I was the full-time Unit Chief. He let it slip that your report had damned Gideon."

"I know that Slessman's minor hero worship for Gideon and the smacking of Bale in the first case back threw him, but you forget Hotch that I am a God and I have studied Psychology with all of my brain power. I was told to watch Gideon and give my own assessment that wasn't colored by want to keep my mentor in place."

"They truly see him like that? Even after your less than stellar review of what happened in Boston six months ago?" Aaron barely paid attention as he drove, listening to Reid's quiet directions on where to go. Aaron stopped in front of a building that looked like it didn't belong in the area. While not a slum, the other buildings were in disrepair, but this building looked new. There was a Chinese restaurant on the ground floor and what looked like apartments above.

"I'm still seen as the young academic, Hotch. Too young to know my own mind about something. Too emotional to render anything that isn't colored by my emotions."

"And yet they are the ones that put you here."

"I don't know if they saw Gideon's want of me and were willing to give him what they wanted but I wanted this job. Ever since I saw Rossi and Gideon, this was what I wanted to do. I changed my track in college to the study of psychology."

"And that's when it changed? When you changed?"

Reid shrugged. He turned his head to look out at the building. "Resident parking is behind."

"You live here?"

"Yes. Top floor. It's all lofts. Each of the four floors above the restaurant is a loft apartment. I have the top floor and the roof. No one used it before anyway. I spent my first few weeks here before I went to the Academy getting it set up the way that I wanted."

"So why don't you like the Chinese restaurant in Quantico?" Aaron asked as he took the parking spot that Spencer directed him to. He shut the car off and looked at Reid. The young God was blushing a little. Aaron left it alone when Reid got out of the car and said nothing.

Aaron followed Reid around to the front of the building. He saw that every single sign for the restaurant was in Mandarin. The menu on the billboard area was all in Mandarin. There were however printed menus in English. Aaron looked at the printed menu over and frowned when he didn't see anything that he wanted. The menu was very different than a typical Chinese restaurant. In fact, he would say that it seemed like food that the Chinese actually ate and not an Americanized version.

Reid stepped up to the counter and yelled into the back, in Mandarin. A tiny old man poked his head out of the office and grinned at Reid before shouting back in Mandarin. Aaron listened to the two of them chat in a language that Aaron didn't know, but he didn't feel left out. He was more intrigued than anything else. After Reid said something that ended with a nod toward Aaron, the old man turned his head to the back and yelled.

"Jin and his wife, Petal, no I don't know her real name, everyone calls her Petal, including her
husband, run this place. He works overnight, and she works the day. They spend each morning together before he goes to bed and she goes to work. He does most of the food prep at night while they are open for catching people leaving bars."

Reid stopped talking as a young white man came out of the back. He had on a dirty apron but had pen smudges on his hand. He started to cook without prompting.

"Jin rents the loft directly above to a collection of seven college kids. For a single night of work from each of them, he charges no rent, and they can eat all of their meals here. As long as they keep good grades, they can stay."

"Do you always get to know the people you rent off of?" Aaron asked because it was a facet of Reid that he hadn't seen before.

"I'm not all-knowing. I'm not just a collection of every single textbook out there on Psychology. I learn by doing. I learn by talking. I talk to everyone that I meet here in the city."

"And how do you have time for that?" Aaron asked. He looked at the boy who was cooking and saw that Jin wasn't even interested in watching him cook.

"What do you mean?" Reid turned around to lean against the counter, looking at Aaron from the side. Aaron turned to the side to face Reid better.

"You never leave the BAU."

"No, I leave. I just don't leave in the hours that regular humans keep."

"How do you have time to sleep?"

"I don't."

"What?" Aaron realized that he had nearly screamed that and he looked at the young man cooking and at the room that Jin was in and saw that both were looking at him. Aaron mouthed sorry and looked back at Reid. "What do you mean you don't sleep?"

"I don't sleep. Some Gods do, some don't. I'm one of the ones that don't." Reid reached into a pocket and pulled out a fifty. Aaron watched him lean back and set it down on the counter as the young man set down three containers of food down into a bag. Aaron frowned when the young man rang up the food and then pocketed the change. "Ready to go eat?"

"Um..."

"He gets to keep all tips. I think that he'll be fine with a near twenty dollar tip."

"Twenty? What did you order?"

"I guess if you want to know, you are going to have to come up." Reid grabbed the bag of food and started toward the door. Aaron laughed a little as he followed him. Aaron wasn't shocked when Reid turned and went to a door. On the other side of the door was the stairs that went up. Each landing had a door on it with an apartment number. Up they went to the fifth floor, and Reid pushed open a door and stepped inside. Aaron followed just far enough to look inside. There were books everywhere. Stacks of them all over. There was a wall that was nothing but piles of books all the way to the ceiling. Aaron was intrigued, so he went over to them. Not all of the books were in English. Aaron laughed as he found that many were older but there were a few mainstream fiction books mixed in. The sound of a drawer shutting had Aaron turning to look at Reid in the kitchen. He
had two forks in his hand as well as a set of chopsticks. Those he slipped down into the bag with their food. Next, he opened the fridge. Aaron was greeted with bottles after bottles of many kinds of beer, various juices, and waters. There was no pop inside.

"Do you want a beer?" Reid was staring at Aaron as Aaron stared at the contents of Reid's fridge.

"You have food, every single day. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner in containers. How do you cook and not have a single thing in there to cook with?" Aaron stepped into the kitchen to see if maybe behind the drinks was food.

"Oh, no. I buy everything fresh. I stop at the store and buy what I want to make what I going to eat for a few days and make it up and store it. I'm currently out of everything. That's why I stopped downstairs and picked up food."

"You cook everything to order?"

"I cook enough for about three meals for me and then I package it up." Reid moved to a cabinet, leaving the fridge standing open and showed him all of the containers. It was like someone with OCD had put everything in the cabinets. The containers were all in size order. All of the round bowls in a stack, all of the rectangles in ones, all of the squares in another, and even the triangle like ones had their own stack. The lids were on the shelf above, again in size order. Reid opened up a cabinet next that had spices. So many containers most with handwritten labels. There were some jars that were very small, and others were large.

"That's all very orderly," was the only thing that Aaron could say about the cabinets. He wondered what was in the other cabinets. Reid must have seen his eyes dart to them because the last two were opened. One held a few glasses on a shelf with a few plates of a couple sizes and a few bowls. The spaces above had bags of coffee beans, four shelves of them. Aaron looked at them and felt his jaw drop. Most of the words on the bags were handwritten in another language.

The last cabinet held boxes. Watertight boxes with what looked like letters in them. Reid didn't offer what those were, and Aaron didn't ask. Reid shut them all and walked back to the fridge. Aaron looked inside again. Many of the beer labels were in languages that Aaron didn't understand.

"Umm...the most exotic beer that you have will be fine."

"Oh, I have many of those. How about I pick four random beers and you can try one, and if you don't like it, we can open another. I love all of these beers. So I won't mind finishing them off if you don't like. Do you want to grab the food and then we can head up?" Reid reached into the fridge and snagged four different beers, and hip-checked the door to shut it. Aaron grabbed the bag of food and looked down into it to try and figure out what the young God had ordered for them. The spice profile of the smell made Aaron's mouth water. "Come on, Hotch."

Aaron turned to see that Reid had made it to the door.

"You said you had an alarm and I just realized that you didn't set it."

"No. I texted my cleaning lady to turn it off as we drove here. She was leaving anyway. That's why I don't go home. I told her that she could pick whatever time she wanted to do my place once a week and I didn't care when it was. She texts beforehand and if I am home, I cook her something and after I go up while she cleans. She calls me a beanpole and a disgrace to the food that I eat."

Aaron had questions. It seemed that Reid was willing to answer some, but Aaron wanted to wait until they were up on the roof. Aaron followed Reid up to the roof wondering about what he was
going to see when he got there. There was not a lot of clutter on the roof, but there were pots of all
kinds with all sorts of plants inside of them. Aaron stared at what he was sure was a desert cactus that
was the height of Aaron. Aaron was also sure that most of the plants were not native to the climate at
all and should be dead.

"Do you bring them all inside when winter hits and where do you keep them?"

"No. They stay right where they are. They survived in California perfectly fine, and they will be fine
here."

"Reid..." Aaron turned to look at him whispering to a plant except as he moved closer, Aaron
realized that it wasn't a plant but a creature of some kind. Aaron pulled the arm with the food closer
until the creature looked at him. Bright green eyes looked at Aaron, and there was a lot of
intelligence in them. Aaron nodded his head at the creature, and it nodded back.

"This is Potluck. She named herself when I found her when I was on the Caltech campus. She's an
Elf."

"Hello, Potluck, my name is Aaron Hotchner."

Potluck waved at him before she turned to head toward where the cactus was. Aaron watched as she
watered it by waving her hand over it.

"Come on, Hotch," Reid called out making Aaron turn to where the voice came from, and Aaron
saw that there was a structure of some kind where Reid's voice came from. Aaron followed the voice
and found that the structure was solid on three of its walls and the roof wasn't so much a roof as
latticework. There were two beds that were perfect for Potluck's body size and a scattering of little
nests, but there was also a chair that was obviously Reid's. Reid waved Aaron into it, and he sat
down on an ottoman of some kind that Aaron hadn't noticed before. "There is a tarp that rolls down
the top and over the opening. Potluck takes care of the plants at night, and her mate takes care of
them during the day. I don't know where Fenrir is."

"Fenrir?" Aaron asked as he pulled the first container of food out. That name he knew.

"Not the Fenrir you are thinking of. No, my Fenrir is only another Elf. He chose that name because I
think he was the runt of the family."

"You talk about people choosing names."

"Yes. Most creatures choose their own names. It's not like there are a lot of families around."

"They don't..." Aaron didn't know the word that he wanted to use there. "Procreate?"

Reid smiled at him.

"Creatures do not have DNA, Hotch. They don't have egg or sperm and while they like the human
sins of the flesh as they call it, no they do not have children." Reid took the next two containers that
Aaron pulled out of the bag from Aaron's hand as soon as they cleared the bag. He set one down and
grabbed the bag next, plopping it on the floor. The container in his hand was revealed to be an egg
roll each, a wonton each, and a strip of beef on sticks each. That container was set between them.
Aaron opened his container to smell that it was General Tso's chicken.

"Oh."

"Potluck calls the plants her babies. I never know what I am going to see up here."
"If you didn't protect her, what would she do?"

"Live in a park or a greenhouse or a neighborhood. She likes to talk to me, and one day she will move on. She'll get sick of the concrete jungle and go live somewhere else."

"Oh." Aaron grabbed a fork from the bag, afraid that if he kept letting Reid distract him, his food would get cold. Aaron handed over the chopsticks, but Reid had a fork in his hand.

"I can't use chopsticks," Reid said.

"You..." Aaron was at a loss for words. He took the chopsticks and started to use them, dropping the fork back into the bag. Reid grabbed a wonton and ate half of it in one go before he cracked open the first beer and handed it over to Aaron. Aaron eyed it but took it and hesitantly took a sip. It tasted like no other beer that he had ever had. It had spices in the profile and was more like a wine, but he could taste the hops. "What is this?"

"It's a secret. It's God beer."

Aaron didn't know if Reid was lying or telling the truth. Reid just held his gaze as he ate the second half of the wonton. The next thing was the stick of beef. Reid snagged it without looking and tore off a bite. Aaron was the one to break their staring contest.

"So if New Gods were created by the belief of man in them, do you have to eat?"

"No. I could live without food, but a fed body is a better body. Some New Gods don't eat. I know of one that lives in a limo all the time and just drives around and plays on the Internet. He doesn't care for his flesh body at all. I like food. I love to eat, and my Godness can burn a lot of calories. That's why my stomach growls. It's empty. When I was working on some of my later degrees the science department wanted to do an experiment. We tracked all of my food and drink consumption. I ate ten thousand calories a day and never gained an ounce. There was even a two week period where I lived on nothing but ice cream, cookies, cakes, and other sweets that have no redeeming value at all. Nothing."

"You seem a little too excited for an experiment on yourself." Aaron looked down at his food, unsure of what he wanted to eat but he settled for putting the lid over the chicken and grabbing the eggroll and the wonton. The wonton was gone in two bites and the eggroll in three. Aaron hadn't realized how hungry he was until he started to eat.

"I might have taken degrees in psychology but I love science, and I know that if I had a part in experiments, it would go better. We didn't do anything internally. No blood, no machines. Just scales. I can put on muscle weight. I walk a lot at night, so my legs are well defined."

Aaron looked up from where he finally took the lid off his chicken and speared a piece. He couldn't tell, but there was something in Reid's voice. "You were holding back in the Academy. Weren't you?"

"Yes. I figured that once I got onto the BAU, I could retake them with Morgan. I didn't expect his hostility. I haven't figured that out but I will."

"He's just upset with everything. I don't know what he is upset with on the whole. I would say that it's just you not putting the time in before being put on the team but that's not all of it."

"How is your food?" Reid asked as he lifted up what looked like a bit of lobster meat on his fork and started to chew it. Aaron realized that Reid's wasn't as gone as he would have expected it to be. He was usually one of the first done, but Aaron remembered that it was always with the others talking
and this time Reid was talking. Aaron picked up a bite of chicken and popped it in his mouth with the chopsticks. He felt the burn on his tongue, but it mellowed out as he chewed. Aaron closed his eyes and savored it. It was the perfect blend of hot and spicy.

"You might have to bring this to me at work on our late days in."

"For a damned good tip, whoever isn't in class will drive a meal to Quantico. Marco has already offered. He's off at nine on Wednesdays and isn't back in until three. Jin takes care of the boys he puts up."

"Just boys?"

"Well no. Just always seven of the same sex. Last year it was girls. I don't know how he picks who gets it, but he does pick some who need it. None of these seven could have made it into college without the help of a place to live. Did well enough to get into college but not well enough for major scholarships."

"And how did you meet him?"

"The first day in DC, I was walking around this area trying to find a nice place to stay when he was out sweeping the walk in front of the store. There was a loft for rent in the window. I went in for food and came out with a place to live."

"So if they are that down on luck, how do they afford a car?"

"It's a piece of shit that they barely keep running, but they do. That's why I said a damned good tip. It's a Ford Fiesta."

"And they drive it to school?"

"No, they bus to school. They wouldn't be caught dead in that thing on campus. They also do light maintenance around the apartment building. Childcare for the lady on three. She needs to cover shifts during the day sometimes, and her boy isn't old enough to stay home alone. The family on four takes in the boy when the college boys can't. It took them a little to warm up to me."

"Seems like it's a family. Where do Jin and Petal live?"

"Since they do all of their cooking in the restaurant, even pot roast once that I remember. Offer it up to those who want it instead, they have a bedroom and a living room on the back half of the building. That's where Jin usually is this late. He must be working on paperwork. They get a rush around two a.m. after the last call at some bars. Usually, fried rice to soak up the beer." Reid leaned back on the ottoman and Aaron heard several bones in body crack as he stretched a little bit. It made Aaron's backache thinking about it. Aaron looked down at his food and realized that he had almost finished it all off.

"If it weren't for your memory and knowing that you don't sleep, I would be scared of what you know of the team. So what exactly do you do when we go back to the hotel on cases?"

"Depends. I sometimes leave again and walk around the town, or I watch TV, I read. Atlanta had a nice library that stayed open all night. I read some local history books in there."

"I'm always trying to figure out a way to cut our budget to get the team things that it needs. How do you feel about bunking with me? I can get a double. Once I'm asleep, the TV won't wake me up. I'd say Elle might even be a good candidate if you want or even JJ."
"Not Morgan?" Reid teased.

Aaron just raised an eyebrow and tucked back into his food. He ate the last few bites of rice that were covered in the sauce from the chicken and leaned back in his chair. He hadn't been able to get Chinese for dinner for a while. He never enjoyed food on cases, so he didn't count when he ate things then. The smell of Chinese and Thai and even Mexican sometimes made Haley sick to her stomach, and it had since she had got pregnant.

"Did you and Haley ever settle on a name?"

"What?"

"Three weeks ago you had a baby name book on your office desk. I was just curious."

"I wasn't even aware that you knew the name of my wife." Aaron tried to remember if he had ever told it to Reid or talked about Haley in front of him.

"I listen, and a lot of times you kind of forget that I am there if I don't participate in a conversation. It's nothing bad. I kind of like it that way but you talk about a lot of things with Gideon and JJ that you don't talk about with anyone else." Reid's manner at that moment showed a little bit of hesitance at what he admitted. Aaron knew that he did share more with those two but JJ was hard not to and Gideon knew Aaron better than anyone in the unit at the moment.

Aaron opened his mouth to say something, but as he did, he realized that his anger at Reid was gone. It wasn't there in his gut anymore. He still wasn't sure that it was the best thing for the BAU, but Aaron knew that deep down, Reid was right. Gideon wasn't over what had happened in Boston, and it was going to spin out of control and who knew what the fallout would be. Reid had fed him and talked to him, and it had calmed him down. Aaron just looked at Reid and saw that he was smirking. Reid had known precisely what he was doing. Aaron picked up his beer and drained it. Reid handed over another and Aaron cracked it open and took a hesitant drink. It was a good bit sweeter than the other but perfect on its own. Aaron saw that Reid had drained one beer and had started on his second before Aaron.

Potluck walked up to Reid and handed over something.

"Oh!" Reid smiled and opened up the box, and Aaron saw that inside were cookies. "Thanks. I missed these when Hotch and I were getting the beer. Dessert?"

Aaron looked into the box that Reid held out and saw that it was simple sugar cookies. Aaron chose two and lifted the first up to his mouth. Aaron hummed as he chewed his first bite. Whoever had made them was great at it. The cookie was perfect.

"And no I am not telling you where I got them. A God's got to keep a few secrets right?"

Aaron thought about how Reid was keeping more than a few secrets, but he didn't say it. He did, however, take two cookies for the drive home when he left a few minutes later.
Chapter 4

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

_Humans want to believe the best from their children. Time has given me the perspective that no matter how good the parents are, the children are shaped by what is around them. The worst apples can fall from the best trees. Humans hold to the ideal that a law-abiding parent will have law-abiding children. Humans have also proved that some of the worst parents in the world produce perfect children, despite the best efforts of the parents to do them harm. Gods are much the same. We have created our own downfall as time has gone by. I see the new things, new Gods, unique creatures that pop up. I see what is coming, even if the rest of the Gods don't know what is coming. I do._

_I see it, and I am prepared for it._

November 2005

Aaron sighed as he leaned back on the couch with Jack in his arms. Haley was out with her sister on a weekend trip that had almost been canceled because of the case with the suspected cult. Haley had not been happy at all with him and the fact that a case had nearly messed up her plans. Aaron had listened to an hour rant from her while she packed up her things, Jack asleep in his crib in his bedroom.

The knock on the door pulled Aaron from his self-flagellation about it all. Haley had been pushing for him to leave the BAU from the moment that they had started to get pregnant. Aaron though did not want to go. Aaron debated for a few seconds whether he really wanted to get up and get the door. It was after eleven at night, and he did not want to greet whoever it was. Aaron laid his head back, thankful that the lights in the house were all off.

A harder knock but not enough to wake Jack sounded and Aaron glared at the door. He still didn't get up. Aaron knew that he hadn't set the alarm yet. It was a warm night for November, in the high fifties and Jack had wanted to be outside where he could cry out to the world with his giggles and noises. There was a secondary sound and Aaron tried to figure out what it was when he realized it was someone picking the lock. Aaron's gun was in the living room safe, and he looked at it until he debated the best way to do this when there was a third knock. That knock Aaron knew. It was the knock that Aaron had come to know well because Reid always knocked before entering his office, even when the door was unlocked.

"Don't shoot, Hotch," Reid said as he opened the door. His voice was soft like he knew that Aaron was sitting there with Jack on his chest. Aaron expected Reid's head to pop around the corner after a few seconds, but it didn't. Aaron still wasn't interested in getting up. He listened and tried to figure out what the young God was doing. Then he heard the door shut and the locks set. Aaron wondered how exactly Reid had picked his lock so quick. Reid's head popped around the wall that separated the small foyet from the rest of the house. "Hungry?"

"No?" Aaron questioned. He hadn't thought about dinner at all. Haley's rant had spoiled the appetite that he had come home with and then he had been focused on Jack.

"Then I'll have to eat all of this by myself." Reid hefted up a plastic bag that was plain and white, inside of it was a brown paper bag. Aaron had seen one like it near two months before. His stomach
growled in answer to Reid's question. Reid grinned. He set the bag down and moved to the kitchen. Aaron listened to him open and shut drawers. He was half tempted to ask what Reid was looking for but was afraid of waking up Jack.

Reid appeared in the living room again with a bottle opener. "You have a magnetic bottle opener. I was in there looking for it in the drawers and turned to try and figure out what drawers I had missed when I saw it on the fridge. I'll have to get one because I never can find any of the three that I have."

"Why do you-" Aaron stopped when Reid picked up the bag again and took the few steps to place him in the living room. He set the bag down, and Aaron heard the clink of bottles. "You brought beer."

"I did. Two each again. I got you two new ones." Reid started to set everything out, and Aaron realized that there were four food containers instead of three like last time.

"And what food did you get?"

"I got you the General Tso's again. I got a special meal that they do for me. It's the General Tso's sauce all over almost every meat they have, none of it deep fried. There isn't any pork though. Beef, chicken, lobster, shrimp, scallops, and calamari." Reid popped the lid on his and Aaron realized there was no rice in it. Reid picked up a second container, and it had Aaron's General Tso's with the vegetable fried rice. The third container held their appetizers of sorts, and the final held a considerable amount of rice noodles covered in a sauce.

"And that?"

"Rice noodles with the General Tso's. I'll share some if you eat all of your food." Reid had a wicked grin on his face.

"No matter if you are a God or not. I am still older than you," Aaron said with mock sternness. Reid, however, doubled over in laughter, covering his mouth to not wake up Jack. When he was done shaking so hard he almost spilled his food he set it down and handed over the appetizers to Aaron and a fork. There was no chopsticks out, and Aaron was thankful for that. He grabbed the egg roll and saw that there was a cup of dipping sauce in there. It didn't look like regular duck sauce. Aaron also saw that it was already open.

"Eat yours, and then I'll eat mine," Reid said before he stuffed a strip of lobster in his mouth.

Watching Reid eat when the team was out had become a new pastime for Aaron. Reid enjoyed everything that he ate, half of the time it was why he didn't talk. He was too busy chewing and savoring each bite of food that passed his lips. Aaron had never seen him eat the same thing twice, except for Mexican. He always got the fajitas. The meat changed, but it was always fajitas.

After finishing off his beef on a stick and his eggroll, Aaron realized that Reid was staring at him. Aaron tracked his eyes and knew that he was not looking at Jack.

"Yes?" Aaron asked.

"I heard Morgan on the jet when we coming home."

"You had headphones on," Aaron said. He had hoped the God wouldn't hear it since he had them on. Then he remembered their last talk. Reid liked to listen in. Aaron would have to make sure that any more discussions about Reid happened in his office behind closed doors.

"I did, and I didn't have them plugged into a single thing. You would think two Profilers would
notice that the cord led to nothing. I would have thought after almost a year, Morgan would be okay
with me being on the team. I guess I was wrong." Reid set his food back down on the coffee table
and stood up, snagging his beer as he did. Aaron was a little worried. Reid had never stopped eating
before the food was gone that is. Reid moved to the window that looked out onto the street. "I don't
think I'm doing too bad. My six-month review happened not long after the bombing, but your only
recommendation was to talk to the team more. I've tried."

"I know."

Jack shifted on Aaron's chest, curling in just a little and Aaron dropped his fork into the container
before putting the food in his free hand. He scooted Jack up his chest some, and the baby huffed.

"He wants skin."

"What?" Aaron asked. He looked up at Reid to see that he was still looking out the window.

"He's restless because he can feel the heat from your skin but he wants to feel it. Bottle fed babies
tend to want more skin contact than breastfed because they don't get the natural feeding time skin to
skin contact. If you want I'll hold him while you get your suit jacket off and unbutton your shirt."

"I'm not-" Aaron stopped himself because he was going to say that he wasn't going to go half naked
in front of Reid, but he thought about how different it would be than running around shirtless in the
rooms while getting ready in the mornings on cases. So far the Reid bunking with him and
sometimes Elle was working. Elle liked Reid. She didn't have whatever it was with Morgan that
made the dark-skinned agent hate Reid. Or the hangup that JJ had. She could work with Reid, but
when it came to anything that had nothing to do with work, JJ clammed up. Aaron talked to Reid
more on the jet on the way home or even at lunchtime, sometimes sitting with him in the bullpen
while they ate lunch.

Reid had even brought in a menu to Jin's restaurant and asked everyone to write down what they
wanted, and it wasn't just his team. Everyone who was in the bullpen that day got free Chinese. It
had helped a few people warm to the young God, but on his own damned team, there was a hangup.
Garcia was a whole different reaction because she made sure to never be left in a room with him, she
never talked to him unless he asked a question, and she never looked him in the eye. Aaron had
thought that he scared Garcia, but it seemed there was something else there. Reid went out of his
way to have Aaron ask her questions, and if there was only Garcia, him, and someone else left in a
room, Reid left with them, always.

"Thanks," Aaron said and held up the food. Reid turned from the window and took the food, he set
it down beside his own before reaching for Jack. Aaron stripped off his suit jacket and threw it onto a
chair before he started to work on his buttons. He unbuttoned all the way before looking at Reid.
God of Psychology probably knew more about Jack needed and wanted than Aaron and it was
making him feel a little inadequate.

"Lean against the arm of the couch and lay your legs out." Reid watched Aaron as he did what he
said before he reached out with a free hand and grabbed first Aaron's food and then his own before
he set them down on Aaron's legs.

"Anything else?"

"I'm going to turn the heat up a little. I know that it probably hasn't kicked on, but it would be better
for Jack if he was down to his diaper. If you draped your shirt around him like a blanket, it'll help
keep in his warmth and allow him to have a lot of skin on skin contact." Reid stood up with Jack in
his arms. Aaron watched him and realized that he was good with the baby. His movements were sure
and showed signs that he had held babies before.

"I think that instead of book after book after book I should have just asked you everything."

"I've read a lot of books."

"And you know a lot as well. Your Godness, is that what you call it? Your Godness gives you a lot of advantage. And your degrees. God, you have more degrees than anyone else I have ever met. That alone would have made you perfect for the team. Your Chemistry degree helped on the OCD fire starter. None of the team was even that close. Also your knowledge of languages."

"So I don't have to worry about being pulled off the team just because Gideon is gone?" Reid asked as he handed over Jack. The boy was already down to his diaper. Aaron looked for the onesie that he had been in and saw it was on the arm of the couch. Aaron shifted Jack to where they were front to front. Jack was still dead asleep, but he seemed to settle down a lot easier with the skin to skin contact. Aaron looked up at Reid and saw him smiling faintly.

"No, you don't have to worry about being pulled off the team. Strauss is still trying to find a senior enough agent to pull in. With Gideon gone, I'm the only senior agent. Strauss has vetoed several of my choices."

"Really? You would think that with how much she harped on you to fill Brannon's spot after his traumatic death that she would be just as quick on this spot getting filled."

"I think that those above are watching her a great deal more."

"Because she sucks at her job?" Reid asked using his fork was a pointing object.

"You'll never hear me repeat this anywhere and even if you swear on all that you are, I'll never agree but yes."

"I understand wanting to show the world that the FBI doesn't care about what sex organ is between the legs of the higher ups but there are some who are a fit, and there are those who are not. It's like having Garcia be in charge of the IT department. She would be a perfect fit in that place, once she had some time under belt, but I would not want her over the BAU. Strauss doesn't have the degrees or the experience. It's not a case of needing a handle on the job. She doesn't seem to have a handle on what being in the BAU is about. You know she pulled me to the side about four weeks ago and asked about cutting down on the time I spend in the range. She doesn't see where it's needed that the New God on the team needs to know how to shoot or defend myself. I'm small. I'm tall, yes but I'm as skinny as a rail, and I know it."

"She told you to stop gun training?" Aaron asked.

"I've improved a lot since I've got out of the Academy. Of course, you know that first hand."

"Yeah." Aaron cringed at the thought about what he had said to the New God when they had been in that ER at gunpoint from a deranged man. Reid had shot Phillip Down dead between the eyes to stop him from shooting up the place. Reid had incited the man to cracking him in the face again while they had been kneeling there and it had spiraled. Aaron had talked the man into moving the hostages, just in case because while Reid had passed his newest requalification, Down had laughed at the way the New God carried his gun. Aaron had kept the New GOd part a secret because he wasn't sure how Dowd would take it. The next thing had been getting Aaron's leg in Reid's hands to get the gun off. Aaron had never regretted an action in his life as much as he did kicking Reid.

It was where the issue with Morgan had started. Morgan was upset that Reid wasn't upset about the
fact that he had to kill someone. Aaron had never asked, almost afraid of what Reid's answer would be. Because Reid was not reacting like any other recruit they had ever had to the Unit and Aaron wasn't sure that it was all because Reid was a God.

"What is Morgan's issue with me?"

"Today? That he doesn't want you on the team but it's also that you..." Aaron wasn't sure how to word what Morgan's issue with Reid was. Or at least the problem that he had figured out. There were more, Aaron was sure.

"Yes? Don't worry about tact. Tact loses its usefulness when someone can read into words. Just spit it out, Hotch."

"After Dowd, you barely blinked. I've seen you with victims, so I know that you have empathy, but there was nothing after killing a man. You've also not started to have the nightmares that most get after about six months."

"When I was two days away from fifteen, Hotch. I watched my mother bleed out in front of me after a man who took too much cocaine was trying to get away from cops. My nightmares of that day are nothing compared to what we do."

Aaron looked down at Jack and thought about that. Knowing that his son watched his mother die in front of him. He couldn't comprehend that. He was at a loss at what to say to Reid, so he went for something that was rather generic. "At least you didn't lose both of your parents that day."

Reid snorted and stabbed at a piece of chicken a lot harder than he had been stabbing anything to eat. Aaron almost asked, but he kept his mouth shut and focused on his food. He finished off his rice, having let it soak up all of the sauce that dripped off the chicken. He looked at the container with noodles and thought about what that had to taste like. He had never tried the rice noodles at a Chinese place.

Aaron drained his first beer, not really tasting it at all. Reid handed over another without a word. Aaron looked at Reid's beer and saw that both of his were empty. "There is a fridge in the basement that has my beer in it."

"Why the basement?"

"Haley doesn't like it to be in the main fridge when guests come over because she thinks that it's too low class."

Reid snorted, and Aaron watched him almost spit food out as he did it.

"Wow. I didn't realize that you Hotchner's were that high of class."

"Haley has an image that she wants to maintain since I'm a high Unit Chief now and we have a lovely son to show off."

"To show off?" Reid asked, his eyes narrowing.

"Yes, well I find that what she wants the world to see is much like what my mother wanted the world to see and it irks me but it makes her happy, so I go along with it for her sake."

"Is that why she doesn't work?" Reid asked.

"She doesn't work because she has never wanted to I think. Her parents owned a store, and she
worked in there growing up. I think she resents it."

"So she married you for your money?" Reid asked.

Aaron didn't answer, and he let the silence speak for him. When they had been younger, Aaron had never suspected it, but the thoughts had been creeping into his mind as the years went on and with her shock at a prenuptial agreement that his lawyer had insisted on. The Hotchner holdings were not massive by the ordinary standard, but they were enough that Aaron could live off of what money he had for the rest of his life and have a good life, even with Jack and never work another day in his life.

The rest of the food was eaten in silence as Jack napped on his father. Aaron knew that Reid had said what he did because of Aaron's comment about not losing his father. There was little known about Reid's childhood. Aaron wondered what he had said that made Reid react like he had but it was for another night when a sleeping child wasn't there with them.

"So why did you pick my lock?" Aaron asked.

"I knew you were inside and brooding. You weren't getting up, so I fixed that problem. Don't worry I don't pick locks unless I know that someone is in the house. The other kids at college thought it funny to steal my dorm room key. I learned how to pick a lock early, and I even rekeyed my room so that my RA didn't have a key that worked."

"Why not?"

"Because the RAs that I had usually left their rooms open all the time. A good distraction and a student popping in could steal the keys with no issue."

"You had that happen a lot?"

"More than enough. I even booby trapped my rooms for a while. Glue and glitter. They couldn't exactly go and tell anyone that they had broke into my room and that was why they were covered in glitter. I used a special glue that I made especially for that. It took forever to come off. They stopped for a while but after I stopped booby trapping the room they just found other things to torment me with."

"When exactly do you think you became a God?" Aaron asked.

"I stopped sleeping as much after Mom's death. I was down to four hours before the end of that school year. I don't know if that was when it happened or over the next while." Reid shrugged, and Aaron knew that he was lying about something but he couldn't tell what or why. Whatever it was, he apparently wanted to keep it a secret so Aaron wouldn't press.

"Jack's awake," Aaron said as he looked down to see Jack's eyes open. The boy made a little noise. Aaron looked up at Reid and saw that he looked shocked.

"He's a little early on that."

"Yes, he started it when I got back from the case. I don't know if Haley knows that he's doing it." Aaron shifted Jack to where he was holding him up. Bouncing him slightly. Jack started to laugh again. "We were outside earlier so he could make as much noise as he wanted and it did not echo around the house."

"How do you feel about going on a walk?"
"It's a little cold for that."

"Are you telling me that?" Reid stood up from where he had been sitting on the couch and started to clean up the debris from their dinner. The noodles were mostly untouched. Aaron watched him put those back in the bag and tuck them near the door. Aaron figured it would be his snack.

"Yes, Reid I am telling you that."

"My temperature runs a little higher than you normals with your ninety-eight point seven degrees. I run around one oh one all the time. If I tuck Jack in my coat, he'll never know that it's cooler outside. Being out and about will be good for him. It's not too cool that he'll get sick and you aren't stuck in the house."

Aaron looked at Reid and saw that Reid had one of those baby slings in his hands. He raised an eyebrow at him.

"I borrowed this from the neighbors below. My goal was to get you outside. If you don't take pictures, we can all three go on a walk."

Aaron eyed Reid for a few seconds.

"No smoking."

"I'd never smoke around Jack like that." Reid looked genuinely affronted at Aaron's words, but Aaron glared at him still. Reid huffed and turned his head a little from Aaron, acting put out. Aaron laughed a little and nodded his head in agreement to going out. A walk around the block would be nice.
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

The Criminal Minds Bang is live for sign-ups! Please check it out here.

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

'It's said the imitation is the sincerest form of flattery but when imitation is used to kill, who is supposed to be flattered. I've been alive long enough to see too many imitations of things that should never be repeated. There's no greater shame than the worst time in history being repeated not because of stupid mistakes but because there is more harm to be created by repeating the mistake.

March 2006

"They introduced you as the resident psychologist," Blackwolf said to Reid as they waited for the medical examiner's office come and get the cult member who had succumbed to the wounds inflicted on him by Blackwolf's knife.

Aaron turned his head to look at the two. There was only the three of them left. Blackwolf and Reid were just far enough away to where Aaron couldn't make out the look on Blackwolf's face but how Reid went rigid, Aaron was sure that there was curiosity on it.

"Yes, Doctor Reid." Reid's tone was very wary, something that Aaron had never heard before.

"I looked you up. A lot of accolades for someone your age, before you joined the FBI."

"And?"

"There have been no New Gods for any tribe across the United States, our belief in our Gods have been too strong." Blackwolf turned more to face Reid. Aaron wanted to move closer, but Reid hadn't reacted yet.

"A good strong belief is a good thing."

"So it brings to mind, and it's been on my mind since I first heard whispers of New Gods if there are new ones, where are the old ones? Where are the Gods that the tribes worship?"

"I can't answer that for you as I am not them but if I were an Old God, I would be well hidden so that a New God with an upstart mind wouldn't come and kill them. Gods can be killed, John Blackwolf." Reid turned away from Blackwolf and walked over to where the swings were on the playground of the school. Reid grabbed one and sat down in it. Aaron turned to stare at Blackwolf.

Blackwolf grinned as he walked over to Aaron.

"He's an interesting choice in an agent for your team, Hotch."

"My previous Unit Chief was the one to make the decision to bring him on."
"And yet you kept him with an agent like Morgan hating him."

"Morgan's reasons for hating him are personal, and I have made it very clear that I don't stand for personal reasons are not a good reason to throw a very valuable member off of the team. I've made it clear to him that if he can't stand Reid, he can leave."

"He was professional with Reid right up until they were alone." Blackwolf looked at where Reid wasn't quite swinging but more like rocking on the swing that he was on. His eyes were on the sky above. "Even your Miss Jareau is a little hesitant. I was shocked to see that you were a member down."

"There had been no replacement decision made by the unit's Section Chief about another senior agent being brought in. I leave that to them and just try and keep my team running smooth."

"And that is why you are a good Unit Chief. The Medical Examiner is taking a little longer than they normally would in coming. Are you hungry? I'm sure I can find something to snack on in the cafeteria."

"Reid's always hungry. He'll eat pretty much anything as long as he doesn't have to use chopsticks." Aaron turned to Reid. "Reid, we are going inside to get a snack. You wait here for the Medical Examiner."

Reid waved his hand up in the air to tell Aaron that he heard him. Aaron laughed as Reid seemed to perk up at the thought of a snack.

The snacks were simple, and by the time that Aaron and Blackwolf came out with them, the Medical Examiner had arrived and had the body loaded up. Reid was standing there with his bag over his shoulder and the back door of the SUV open. He held out his hand for his snacks. Aaron shook his head. He had just opted for a carton of milk and a few packs of graham crackers. Blackwolf had a carton of orange juice and a fruit bar of some kind. For Reid, Aaron had picked a carton of chocolate milk, which was hidden in his coat pocket for a surprise, as well as a carton of orange juice, a pack of graham crackers, a banana, a fruit bar like Blackwolf, had, and a package of chocolate chip cookies. Blackwolf had just smirked at the fifty that was left with a note that it was for getting the kids a good snack to replace the one the hungry agents had eaten.

Aaron dropped all of Reid's snacks on the back seat, nudging the young God out of the way to do it. The chocolate milk was hidden in the front when Aaron moved to get into the front seat.

"That's a lot of food and such little drink," Reid pouted as he opened the orange juice and took a small sip. Aaron finished off his crackers and the last of his milk before he got into the front seat. Blackwolf looked a little shocked at such a display from the New God, but he shrugged and went with it.

Aaron was shocked that Blackwolf wasn't trying to drive. Blackwolf settled into the passenger seat with no issue and even grinned at Aaron as he pulled out of the school lot. Aaron looked at Reid in the rear view mirror several times as they drove. He was being careful with the crackers, getting little to no crumbs everywhere. The juice was sipped as he ate and the banana was saved for last.

"I heard you asking for directions to the best place in the area to get authentic local fare," Blackwolf said turning around to look at Reid.

"Reid's stomach is rather large, and he loves to try new things." Aaron had got used to asking about local fare everywhere that they went, whether it was street tacos or the best macaroni salad.
"Each tribe has their own styles of cooking and area spices to use. There were six major tribes in Nevada where I grew up, and I tried as many dishes as I could of theirs. I loved the majority of them. I would love to try food of your tribe."

"Does he do this everywhere?" Blackwolf asked.

"Yes," Aaron and Reid answered at the same time.

Reid grinned at the rearview mirror, Aaron figured that he knew that Aaron would see him.

"I'll give you the name of a place. It's up to you to find it."

Reid nodded, the grin not leaving his face at all. Aaron reached down into where he had hidden the chocolate milk and held it up. The look of happiness on Reid's face followed by the slightly childlike gimme gesture made Aaron laugh.

The rest of the day was taken up with getting things taken care of and the team was readying themselves to leave. Reid was pouting because there wasn't time to find the restaurant that Blackwolf had given him the name of before the departure time that the airport had given them.

JJ's phone ringing as they were headed to the airport had Aaron's head going up to look in the rearview mirror. JJ was seated in the middle of the second row of seats with Reid in the front passenger seat.

"Hello?" JJ asked, her voice a little more curious than normal. She was used to unknown phone numbers calling her, but this one had to be a known number, one that she was sure shouldn't be calling her. "Okay. Thank you. Nine-thirty? Yes. Again, thank you."

"JJ?"

"We can head back to the hotel. The Jet was going through pre-flight check, and an engine started to act up. There is no one on hand that can work on our Jet and so someone will have to come from out of town. Our current departure time, if it's an easy fix is nine thirty tomorrow morning. I will be told at eight how likely that is."

Aaron looked over at Reid for a second to see the young God smiling.

"Quit smiling, Reid. I was looking forward to getting some sleep in my own bed." Aaron's tone was sharp, but there was a little humor in it. The grin didn't leave Reid's face but instead grew brighter.

"How about I call Morgan, and we can stop and discuss what we want to eat for dinner?" JJ asked.

"How about I just pull into this parking lot?" Aaron said as he turned on his blinker. There was a large parking lot coming up that was nearly empty. Just seconds later, Morgan's blinker turned on as well. Aaron pulled smoothly into the parking lot and put the SUV in park before getting out.

"What's up?" Morgan asked as he got out of driver's seat of his SUV.

"Issue with a jet engine. They hope it'll be fixed tomorrow morning. So JJ is going to get the hotel rooms again, I hope. If not a new place and we have the night to do what we want."

"Food sounds good."

"Blackwolf gave me the name of a good place for the local tribal fare," Reid offered. The look that Morgan and Elle gave Reid told Aaron that they didn't want that. Reid knew it too because he
deflated some and his hand went to the strap of his bag. "I guess that I'll be eating that alone. JJ, text me what room I am in and leave a key at the desk."

"Sure," JJ said, looking a little upset. Reid disappeared around the side of the SUV and Aaron heard the door open and after a minute shut again. He didn't look, but he wanted to. He just didn't want to see Reid sitting there looking dejected. Aaron looked at Morgan and Elle, Elle looked a little ashamed, but Morgan did not.

"I want everyone back to the hotel at a good time and get some sleep in. We didn't get a lot on this case. JJ, please let me know what room you put Reid and I in and leave keys for both of us at the desk."

"Of course, Hotch."

JJ took that as the dismissal that Aaron hoped it would come across as. Aaron watched as the three other agents got into Morgan's SUV and backed out to leave the way that he had come. Aaron sighed and turned toward his SUV. It was one step forward and two steps back all the time with Reid and his interactions with the team. Reid wasn't going to offer up suggestions on food for a long while. Aaron opened the driver's side door to see that Reid wasn't in the SUV. His bag was sitting on the front seat. Aaron reached over and put in the code for the gun safe that was in the middle console and saw that Reid's gun was there. Aaron didn't feel slightly upset when he grabbed Reid's bag and looked through it. Reid had wallet and credentials on him which Aaron was thankful for. Aaron pulled his phone from his pocket as he shut the driver's door. He called Reid's cell phone immediately. It went unanswered. The second called went to voicemail after a few rings. Reid had declined it. Aaron called again and again. Each called going to voicemail after the first ring. Reid hadn't shut his phone off, but he was declining each and every call.

Aaron texted Reid to pick up. Reid texted back that he was hungry and needed to find food and Aaron was free to do whatever he wanted. Aaron sighed and knew that more than just Morgan's dismissal of Reid's food choice had happened. Aaron slumped in his seat and messaged Reid that he wanted to eat as well. Nothing came back on that one for several minutes. Aaron looked around where he was and saw a McDonald's parking lot. He started up the SUV and drove to it. Taking a spot in the back of the lot, furthest from the door before he got out and went inside.

"Is there a manager on duty?" Aaron asked the young man who was at the register. The man nodded, his eyes drawn to the gun. Aaron pulled out his credentials and showed the young man. The man took off at a speedy walk to the back. A minute later, he came back with a woman who looked to be around Aaron's age. "Hello, Ma'am. My name is Aaron Hotchner, I'm an FBI agent in town. I need a good place to park my work SUV while I do some looking around the area. Don't worry there is nothing to be worried about but I saw that you have cameras in your lot. I am hoping that I can use your lot to leave my vehicle in."

"Sure. We are open twenty-four hours and I work until five a.m. so the SUV will be well watched."

"Thank you." Aaron nodded before he turned to leave. Reid was on foot, and there was no way that he could have got that far. Blackwolf had not said the name of the restaurant aloud. Instead, he had whispered it to Reid when they had arrived at the station and got out of the SUV. It struck Aaron as odd, but he had never questioned it. Now he was regretting not asking the name. Blackwolf had made it seem like if Aaron Googled it, he wouldn't find it so even the name probably wouldn't help at all.

Aaron looked at the parking lot that they had been in when Reid set off on foot. He knew that no one had commented on Reid walking, so he had to have gone off from the SUV and used it as cover. Still, there was only a single way that Reid could have gone, so Aaron went that way. However,
when he got to the end of that block, he realized that they were right in downtown and there was a lot of places that Reid could have gone from there. Aaron sighed. He still had his gun on him, but he wasn't too worried about it. He had his credentials on him, and not many would try and stop him. Still, he buttoned up his suit jacket to cover the gun some.

There were three directions Aaron could go, but the left look like it had more food options.

Two hours later, Aaron was sure that Reid had disappeared off the face of the earth. Reid hadn't responded to any of Aaron's texts, and Aaron would be worried except for the fact that he knew if it were case related, Reid would respond.

"You look like you need a good stiff drink," a woman said from Aaron's side. Aaron turned to look at her. She looked to be a few years older than Morgan but was beautiful.

"I don't think that a drink will help me in this instance."

"No? Well, why don't you be a gentleman like I know you were raised to be and escort me to my favorite drinking spot?"

"Yes, Ma'am," Aaron said as he stood up from the steps where he had been sitting. The woman slipped her hand down to Aaron's elbow and tucked herself in close. Aaron was a little put off by it, but there was something from her. Something that felt familiar.Aaron said nothing as she led him over to a very empty part of town. The other businesses were all shut down, but there was a sign in front of one that had a neon roadrunner sign in front of it. The woman entered the establishment and pulled Aaron along with her. Aaron expected it to be a seedy bar from the outside of it.

However, what was inside wasn't seedy at all. It was beautiful. It was all wood and natural earth tones. Every eye in the place though turned to look at them.

"My friend and I want a good stiff drink."

The man behind the bar set down two tumblers with dark liquid inside. The woman picked up her glass and took a drink. Aaron picked up his and looked around again. Only two were looking at him anymore.

"Hungry, Fed?" the bartender asked. Aaron looked at him in shock. His stomach growled because he hadn't eaten dinner. Dinner was going to be grabbed from the airport. "Good. I'll have a plate made up for you."

"I..." Aaron trailed off as the bartender left the bar area and went back to what Aaron assumed was the kitchen. The woman walked away from Aaron and sat down with a group of men at a table. There were a few other women in the bar. All of them would glance up at Aaron, and he felt like maybe he shouldn't be there.

Aaron felt goosebumps pop up on his skin as heard someone moving behind him. He didn't turn to look, even when he smelled food and heard a plate being set down. A second and then third was set down, and that is what made him turn around. He looked to see no one there, but then a clunk from below had Aaron leaning over the bar. A mess of curly brown hair was the only thing that he saw before a very familiar hand place a wine glass on the counter beside him.

"You know if you had more wine offerings, more people would drink wine and your wine glasses wouldn't get dusty," Reid yelled. The bartender laughed from where he was standing at the edge of the bar. Reid popped up with a smile on his face. Aaron looked back out at the others in the bar and realized something.
Every single one of the people inside the bar was a God. Aaron swallowed sharply and turned back to Reid even though his entire body was telling him not to do it. Not to turn his back on the eight Gods that were behind him. Aaron looked at the bartender. He didn't know enough about any of the Apache Gods to know who was who.

"Eat, Hotch. No one is going to bite you," Reid said and pushed the plate in front of Aaron a little closer. The food looked good, but Aaron wasn't that hungry anymore. Reid snagged the tumbler that had been poured for Aaron and drank it. He made a face of disgust and shook his head. "I'll get you a good beer."

Aaron watched Reid get him a beer from a fridge down below the bartender never saying a thing. Once Reid was around the counter and was sitting beside where Aaron was standing, the bartender moved out to sit with one of the female Gods.

"You were going to bring the team here?"

"No. I found the place that Blackwolf told me about two hours ago. It was good. Then I found this place."

"Are they all...New?" Aaron asked.

"No. Old but they don't mind New Gods passing through. You should have just left me alone. I would have come back to the hotel in a little bit."

"I didn't like you out and about without your gun."

"You do know that it takes a good bit to kill me right? I'm safer without my gun than you are with your primary. But thank you for caring about me. I just don't know how I feel about you pitying me."

"It's not pity, Reid. I consider you a friend, and I wanted to make sure that my friend was all right."

"Really?" Reid asked, and Aaron saw how happy being called his friend made Reid.

"Really."

"Do you want to know something nice about an establishment that's run by Gods?" Reid asked as he reached into his pocket and pulled out his cigarette case.

"You ain't smoking those in here," the bartender said.

Aaron looked up to see that he had slipped behind the bar again for a refill of his beer mug from the tap.

"These aren't regular cigarettes. These are a concoction that I made of my own. Here." Reid pulled one out and handed it over. The bartender took the cigarette and smelled it. He smiled and handed it back over. Aaron looked out and saw that several of the other Gods had cigarettes in hand. The bar had smelled of it when he had come in, and he hadn't noticed the renewal of the smell. Aaron reached up and picked up the bottle of beer and took a sip. It was a very simple beer compared to what Reid had been giving him, but as it wasn't from his weird collection of beers from his home, he would forgive him. Aaron lifted up the spoon and tried the meat that was on his plate.

Reid blew the smoke from his cigarette away from Aaron while they sat there and ate silently. The conversations from the people behind washed over him.
"So, there is a monster movie marathon on one of the channels. I saw it on the TV at the restaurant. Wanna go back to the hotel and watch it until you fall asleep?" Reid asked.

"Sounds like a plan." Aaron finished off the last few bites of his food and drained the beer. He started to pull out his wallet but the bartender was there, and he laid his hand over Aaron's.

"On the house. Take this one back and let him unwind."

"Thanks."

"Yes. Thanks!" Reid said as he pulled Aaron after him and out the door. Aaron saw though that there was something that looked like a bill slipped under Reid's plate. Aaron grinned.
Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

The Criminal Minds Bang is live for sign-ups! Please check it out here.

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

*Humans see what they want to see so hiding in plain sight is easier for Old Gods and sometimes the New Gods as well. Some New Gods prefer to come out and help humans while others want to hide. Many Old Gods hide because some New Gods hate them and would rather kill the previous version of themselves. Old Gods needs worship to stay alive, New Gods don't need worship so much as the obsession. New Gods are formed from the obsession of the humans who have created them. As long as someone is obsessed with something, a New God will be formed. That makes finding a New God hard. Some are created from scratch, popped into existence by obsession, some create themselves by being obsessed with something. One never knows which a New God is and many tell lies as easy as they breathe to humans.*

March 2006

Reid wasn't on the roof of the hotel that they were in. No, he was on a balcony. Aaron wasn't sure how to take the silence that had been Reid since the horrid dinner where Reid had tried chopsticks. JJ had tried the rubber band trick, and it had failed as well. Aaron had smiled when he took the fork from the waitress to give to Reid. That dinner had ended worse when a cop killer was taken out.

Now, the team was relaxing after a grueling case. Morgan, JJ, and Elle had gone out into the city to unwind that way. Aaron had talked to Haley. That was why Reid was out on the balcony. Aaron had asked him to not go out into the city.

A puff of smoke appeared above Reid's head. Aaron watched him as he stared into the sky. Haley was upset that the Jet had been sent on to take a different team to another case that was urgent. Haley was upset that Aaron wasn't going to be coming home quickly.

Halfway through the case, Strauss had called Aaron to tell him that no senior agent had stepped up to match what the Director wanted for the team, so they were going to open it up to any agent who wanted to join the team and that Aaron would have their files when he got back to Quantico.

Aaron opened the door that led onto the balcony.

"The din of the city draws you in huh?"

"No, I'll take anything over the noise of silence."

"Do you want to head out?" Reid tipped his head back to look up at the sky.

"So where are you going to take me in New York City?"

"I don't know. I like just walking and find what I find."
"Have you been to New York before?"

"Mom went once but didn't take me."

"Then it would be seeing what you see. Are you going to force me out of a suit like JJ does on occasion?" Aaron smiled as Reid's head tipped down to look at him as he spoke. Reid started to smile.

"No. You can go however you want as far as I am concerned."

Aaron didn't change, but he did ditch his jacket and tie before joining Reid down in the lobby. The younger God was chatting with a lady at the reception desk. Aaron realized just seconds after watching her talk with him that she was flirting and Reid either didn't notice or didn't care. His body language was closed off. The woman slipped a piece of paper over to him, and Reid nodded his head in thanks before pushing off of the counter. Reid turned around, and his eyes went right to where Aaron was.

Reid held up the paper and nodded toward the exit. Aaron started to walk that way, when Aaron drew level with Reid, Reid began to walk to meet him.

"So, you tortured me with Chinese now I am going to torture you." Reid grinned and smiled at the man who was holding a cab for them. Reid slipped into the back and slid all the way over to where Aaron had room to get in. As Aaron got in, he saw Reid hand over the piece of paper to the driver.

"So where are we going?"

"To eat and then we will walk back and see what we see."

"Elle said that you were close to the actress from the case in LA. Did you keep in contact?"

"No. I was protective of her, and she took that as being into her."

"So she's not your type?"

"No. Lila Archer is not my type. Not for females. Not males."

"What is Doctor Reid's type in males and females?" Aaron watched the buildings pass by as the cab made good time as they streaked across the city, it was surprising.

"I don't give those things away from free, or ever really."

The cab pulled up in front of a pizza joint that Aaron could smell, even inside of the cab. Reid got out of his side of the cab, and Aaron followed.

"Where are we?"

"A hole in the wall joint that the receptionist at the hotel said is the best pizza that only locals know about. Also, they have really crappy beer." Reid smirked before he strolled into the pizza place. Aaron laughed as he looked around. It did look like a place that only a local would go to. Aaron saw Reid in a corner booth with a pitcher of beer in front of him by the time that Aaron entered. It was a total hole in the wall, but it had charm and Aaron liked it before he even got all the way inside.

"You find the most interesting places," Aaron said as he sat down. From where they were they had a good view of the entire place. Between Reid having a good cover on the main entrance and Aaron having a good view of the secondary exit. After the feelings that the last case had brought up about
"Because I am not scared to go to different places. I am not scared to go into weird places. I spent a lot of the months after I turned eighteen going around to everywhere that I could. It was when I tried beer for the first time."

"You drank illegally?" Aaron asked as Reid lifted his glass of beer and took a drink. Aaron could tell that Reid didn't hate the beer, but he wasn't enjoying it.

"No. Those New Gods that step forward, especially when they are underage, when they turn eighteen, they are allowed all of the things that twenty-one years old can do. Mainly because I can't get drunk. There was a New God who drank a Russian under the table. When the cops came to break up the fight, they had the New God blow into the breathalyzer. He blew a point zero. Like he had nothing in his blood. When an actual blood draw was done, it was the same."

"That's interesting."

"Yes." Reid picked up his beer and took a drink again as someone set down a pizza on the table. Aaron eyed it for a second before he looked at Reid.

"Pineapple does not belong on pizza."

"You've never tried pineapple on pizza."

Aaron opened his mouth to refute that but his mind ticked over his life, and he had not ever tried pineapple on pizza. Aaron looked at the pizza covered in pepperoni, green peppers, red onions, and pineapple. He poked at the pizza with his fork before using it pull a piece off the tray and onto his plate. Aaron watched as Reid picked up a piece and folded it nearly in half before taking a bite. Reid made a pleasure filled noise and his eyes closed as he smelled his piece. Reid only ever ordered pepperoni pizza when they got pizza on cases.

Reid had nearly devoured his first piece of pizza before Aaron had used his fork to cut off a piece that was just big enough to have a bit of each topping on it. Reid raised his eyebrow.

"My mother didn't believe that food eaten at the dinner table was meant to be eaten with fingers. The only thing that was allowed to be eaten with fingers were hors d'oeuvre that was served before being seated. The only time that I got to eat pizza with my hands was when I stayed over at someone's house and after I finally left my mother's home."

"Then why are you eating it with a fork now?" Reid took a huge bite of his second slice of pizza.

"In case the pineapple contaminates my fingers?" Aaron said with a laugh. Reid started to laugh but then began to choke on the food in his mouth. Reid picked up a napkin and coughed into it. Reid finished chewing his food and then glared at Aaron. Aaron lifted up his fork with the bite of the pizza and almost toasted Reid before placing it in his mouth. Aaron waited for the horrible taste to spread over his taste buds but as he chewed he realized that it wasn't that bad. The pineapple helped cut down the strong flavor of the onion and cool the bite of the pepperoni which had a very big bite to it. Aaron hummed as he chewed to tell Reid that he liked it.

"See. It's good with regular pepperoni, but it's better with spicy pepperoni." Reid was giving Aaron a shit eating grin. Aaron laughed a little and stuck his tongue out which made Reid start laughing so hard that he choked on his beer. Reid barely held in the spray of beer everywhere. He grabbed a pile of napkins and daintily spit into them. "I don't think the team would believe what you just did."

"I can relax."
"Just not at work. Don't think I know you keep up an official and bossy air when you are working. You are holding this team together better than anyone one else would have been able in the wake of everything over the past two years."

"Sometimes I don't think I can do it much longer."

Reid said nothing in response. He just stared at his pizza for a minute before starting to eat again. Aaron found himself hungrier than he had felt the entire case, so he ate nearly half of the pizza in front of them. Reid finished off the second half.

"Bauer's team made mention of something the other day," Reid said. He wasn't looking at Aaron as he talked but instead was rubbing a finger up and down the condensation of the glass of beer in front of him. "Hernandez is moving to California to be closer to his ex-wife and kids. The team said that if Morgan got to be too much, they would gladly take me as Hernandez's replacement."

"Bauer's team doesn't like you."

"No. They don't talk to me in front of Morgan. I went out to a bar with them three weeks ago. Bauer offered, and I took him up on it. They are afraid of Morgan getting upset at them and making life horrible for everyone. I knew that before though. It was kind of hard not to. I've done lunch with them a few times when Morgan has left the office for lunch with Garcia or JJ."

"Do you want to join Bauer's team?"

"Want to? No. Will I to make like easier on you? Yes. I can't help but think that finding a replacement for Brannon is as hard as it is because of me."

"Actually, it has a lot to do with me because I will not give up my role as Unit Chief. Anyone else who is coming in has more time in than me. Not in the BAU so, for now, Strauss is keeping me as Unit Chief, and anyone who comes in would have to be my second in command. Most of these people are already Unit Chiefs in their own right, and while they would not take a pay cut, they don't want to be under anyone. Especially someone younger than them. There might be a little bit of it being about you, but the majority is me. You leaving wouldn't help, and I would not let you go without a fight."

"Okay."

Aaron knew though that it wasn't over. He wasn't sure that he liked that the only reason that Reid would leave the team was that it was making Aaron's life harder. It wasn't like he was offering to leave the unit all the way, Morgan would still have a problem with him being in the unit, in any form. That was

"I would have thought that Strauss would love to displace you."

"Strauss would love to, but it's hard to keep a Unit Chief that had not served in the unit before being promoted. The other members of the team have a hard time trusting them, and they don't understand how the unit is run. We had a team almost let a killer kill all of them because of a very green Unit Chief. There are a few cases where one can step in from the outside."

"Interesting."

"So I saw you reading a book on the Jet. It looked like a mainstream fiction book."

"Yes." Reid's answer was short and clipped before he took a long pull of his beer. Aaron looked at the pitcher and saw that Reid had emptied it. While Reid might not be able to get drunk, Aaron was
pretty sure that he shouldn't drink that much.

Aaron waited for Reid to expand on the book but he didn't.

"So where are we headed next?"

"I don't know. Let's pay and get out of here and see what we can find."

Aaron didn't push Reid when he was silent for the first block as they walked. Reid was looking around and was smiling. Aaron wondered what trigger he had hit with the book. He would ask again, maybe on the flight home.

"New York has always fascinated me," Reid said as a small group of people running passed by them. Reid had grabbed Aaron's arm and pulled him back as the runners had rounded the corner.

"I don't know if I would run in New York, even in a group," Aaron said.

"You look scary, only someone truly insane would go after you, Hotch." Reid waited for the last runner to pass before he went around the corner with Aaron on his heels. Aaron looked around, looking at the city for the first time with an eye of someone who was there as a tourist. As much as had been with JJ in talking about Reid needing to take his long weekends off after cases and go visit places, Aaron knew that he was just as bad. He wanted to stay home after running around the country. He could understand Reid's want to stay home. He was young though, only been on the Earth for not even a quarter of a century. He was too young to just want to stay at home.

"Where are we going?" Aaron asked because it felt like he was being led somewhere. Reid didn't turn back to look at him. Instead, he just kept on walking. Aaron hurried up his steps to get to where he was even with Reid. Aaron bumped into Reid's shoulder trying to get Reid to look at him. Reid though was focused ahead. Aaron laughed when he saw a woman in a bright purple wig turned down an alley. The bright purple wig was very interesting looking.

"How do you feel about going to a club and people watching?" Reid asked.

Aaron looked up and saw that at the end of the alley wasn't another opening, it was a door. A door painted purple. The wall all around the door was multi-colored.

"What is this place?"

"Did you know that there was a God of Sex?" Reid asked.

"No."

"Yeah. Technically Goddess. She's found a lovely place to live and all I knew was there she was in New York. Since Mom didn't bring me that time, I've never been able to find her home. I think that I have." Reid had a grin plastered on his face. "Do you want to come in?"

"Sure." Aaron wasn't sure what he felt about going into the din of a sex Goddess, but it would be interesting. Reid stepped up to the guard who Aaron hadn't noticed before. The man looked Aaron up and down first before looking at Reid.

"Too skinny," the guard said. Reid laughed, but the door was opened. Aaron fell into step behind Reid. Once the outside door was shut, they were total darkness. Aaron could hear music coming from the end of the hall they were in, but there was no light.

"Get ready," Reid said.
Reid stopped, and Aaron ran into the back of him. He felt Reid reach up and part a curtain. It let light in and Aaron's eyes adjusted quicker than usual. Aaron didn't know what to expect, but he knew from college what some of the worshippers of Bacchus had done in olden time. He expected there to be half naked bodies all over. There wasn't though. Aaron couldn't see any more skin than at a typical club. There were more people that were dancing closer and cuddling closer on the couches scattered around. A bar stretched across the entire back of the building with three different bartenders, two males and a female.

"Is this all Gods?" Aaron asked, leaning forward to where his lips nearly brushed Reid's ear.

"No. I wouldn't be shocked if there were few Gods here at all."

"Really?"

"The humans in here don't know that it's a club run by a God. Probably not even most of the staff know it."

Aaron followed Reid to the bar and looked at the list of drinks that were under the glass of the bar. Aaron saw there was a list for every type of drink. Aaron moved down the bar and found the beer list, of everything they had on tap and in bottles.

"See anything you like?" a woman asked as she came up to Aaron. Aaron looked out of the side of his eye at her.

"The ring on his finger means something to him," Reid said, his voice cold.

Aaron looked up at him and saw that Reid's eyes were icy. He had never seen Reid's eyes look like that before. It made him shiver. The woman walked away.

"Two tall glasses of beer number twelve, please."

The bartender said nothing but turned to leave.

"What's with that?"

"I don't know. Maybe to not intrude on the romance between the aspiring couples. Let's find a seat and discuss what is wrong with everyone in the place." Reid had a grin on his face as he grabbed the beer that was set down in front of him. He laid down what looked like a poker chip. The bartender took it.

"What was that?"

"It's how Gods pays here. You exchange cash for chips. So have you seen the foursome in the corner?"

Aaron looked at where Reid nodded his head. There were three men draped around a woman. Oh, he could talk about them all day.
The Criminal Minds Bang is live for sign-ups! Please check it out [here](#).

**From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge**

*Don't shoot the messenger.*

*A very human idiom but it applies to Gods as well, the Gods of Old and the New Gods as well. No one likes getting bad new, and many a time the person delivering it is yelled at or even hurt. No one wants to give bad news, but sometimes it's impossible because that knowledge that one has can't be ignored. Humans will question if giving someone that much pain is worth telling them the truth. Gods will hesitate because they wonder if they have the right to tell humans what they know that they shouldn't know if they weren't a God.*

**November 2006**

Aaron knew exactly where to find Reid when he exited his office at eight and the young God wasn't anywhere to be found, but his messenger bag was still at his desk. It had been a rocky half a year for the team. It had started out with the case that had hit too home for all of them with a man who called himself the Fisher King. Reid had figured out his game plan and an excellent way to handle him without making him angry. It had taken too long to figure out the Fisher King, even with the replacement for Brannon finally on the team.

Emily Prentiss had been a nice person to join the team. It was good to have someone who had experience with other agencies. It hadn't taken long for Aaron to realize that the reason that Reid was standoffish to her was that he could see through her and why she was really there. Aaron had put a kibosh on that. Telling Reid that he knew that Strauss had put her on the team to spy on Aaron and what he did with the team. Aaron had seen through that when Strauss had put her on the team without telling him at all. Having her just show up one morning had been the first clue. Strauss wasn't good at subtle.

For a short time, there had been more women on the team than men. Nothing really changed with that, in the field they were split evenly. Then Elle had left, unable to handle the nature of the people that they hunted. Reid had been the one to talk her into leaving before she did something that she would regret because she had let the killers too far into her head. She was settled in a field office in New York and wrote Reid on a regular basis, and it was real, honest to God, letters. Reid was always excited to get one at the office.

Now they were short another team member. Aaron was working through the files from Agents that he had left before Prentiss had joined. Aaron didn't know if he wanted to add another member. They were doing well in the field with only five members.

Pushing the door open, Aaron was greeted with the particular smell of Reid's cigarettes. Aaron still hadn't asked him what were in them to give them that smell. The smell though was a balm to Aaron's
soul, smelling it always calmed him down. Aaron moved around the hoods and such on the roof to find Reid's little hideaway. He stopped though when he saw that there was a pile of butts on the edge of the roof beside where Reid was sitting with his legs dangling over the side. Reid always put his butts in the ashtray that had been carried to his end of the roof. If he was lining them up in a row, he was counting them. Aaron had never seen him count them before. Aaron counted them in his head. Ten. Even on cases, Reid rarely smoked more than about five or six in a day. Aaron knew how long it took for Reid to smoke a cigarette. Four minutes in warm weather or three in extremely hot or cold weather. Somewhere between for either, that was just a bit too cold, and he didn't want to wear a jacket.

Aaron stopped and stared as Reid set down the eleventh cigarette and reached for the case at the other side. Aaron looked at it and saw that it was full. Meaning that Reid had a stash somewhere up there. Aaron was moving before he figured out what exactly he was doing. Aaron laid his hand over Reid's, stopping him from raising up the hand with the cigarette in it. Reid turned to look at him, and when Aaron just stared at him for a few seconds, Reid dropped the cigarette. Aaron tucked it into the pocket inside the metal case and shut it before slipping it into his shirt pocket and covered it with his jacket. Reid broke eye contact and picked up each of the smoked butts before dropping them down into the ashtray.

"So, what's got you worried?" Aaron asked as he sat down on the cold concrete of the roof edge. Reid waved in an upward motion, so Aaron stood up. Reid stood up as well and moved to a little shed that Aaron hadn't ever paid too much attention to. He pulled out two things. The first was spread over the concrete. It was just big enough for the two of them to sit on but they would have to brush arms some. Reid sat down with the second thing in his lap and patted the blanket beside him, and Aaron sat down but facing the other direction. He didn't like looking down at the ground below him. Reid draped the second over Aaron, it was a larger blanket, and with the chill in the air from the nearly set sun, Aaron was thankful for it.

"I need your opinion on something."

"Okay." Aaron was a little shocked. Reid didn't ask for advice, except for that one time that he did from Garcia who had been thawing toward the New God more and more as Reid slowly started talk to her. She had even begun to call him on cases on occasion when she found something of importance. The working relationship with Morgan was as good as it was going to get. Aaron wanted to step in, but Reid asked him again and again not to.

Reid turned toward Aaron, scooting back so that he had one leg on either side of the small roof wall they were sitting on before scooting closer again. He looked impossibly young, younger than Aaron had thought him to be when he joined the team. Reid had grown so much since he had joined the team. He was a remarkable young God. Aaron wondered what had him so upset that he was asking for advice.

"I know of a man whose wife is cheating on him. In fact, at this moment she's having sex, not in her marital bed and not with her husband."

"How do you know?" Aaron asked. Reid's eyes darted up to Aaron's and the look he gave him made Aaron feel like he was stupid. The God powers that Reid had. Aaron still didn't understand how Reid knew what he knew, but it was easy to understand that Reid knew things that he shouldn't because of it. "How close are you to the man? Or even the wife?"

"I consider the man a friend, but I am unsure how he feels about me. The wife, she's always been standoffish when we have met, but then a lot of people with secrets are with Gods. I'm afraid that what friendship we have is going to be crushed by me telling him that his wife is cheating on him
and has been for a long while."

"How long have you known?"

"Proof? Just before this last case but I didn't want to possibly disrupt this case. There was too much riding on it."

Aaron felt his heart sink. Reid turned his head away. He looked so upset, and Aaron didn't know what he could do to make Reid feel better.

"As a friend, you need to tell the husband before he catches them or it's out in a way that would bring shame to the man. If he genuinely likes you as a friend as much as you like him as a friend, it might strain the relationship you have built with him, but it will weather it.

"Aaron?" Reid asked.

"Yes?" Aaron answered because he was pretty sure that he knew the words that were going to follow.

"Haley is at the Ritz-Carlton, and I'm pretty sure that every time you leave on a case, she has her sister watch Jack and goes there. I'm fairly certain it's been as far back as the Fisher King case but before I can't say for certain."

Aaron turned away from Reid and looked out at the lights spanning the base. Aaron was pretty sure that it had happened before then. There were calls that Aaron had thought were from friends and Haley didn't want to bother him with girl talk after a case when he came home from a case early, but now it was all in question.

"Do you...can you..." Aaron swallowed and reached into his pocket to pull out the cigarette case. He opened it and pulled out two cigarettes. Reid had the lighter out and took one from him. Reid lit his and then leaned in to light Aaron's. Aaron took a small puff because it had been years since he had smoked a full cigarette. Haley had been the reason that he quit but had been the reason he had started as well. Reid let the silence pass between them as they sat there and smoked. Reid still made sure that his smoke didn't blow right at Aaron. Halfway through the cigarette, Aaron knew that he would probably ask Reid for some of these to help him over the next while but then would ask the God to make sure that he didn't smoke too many or for too long. It was better than a drink, and Aaron wanted a drink badly. He wanted to crawl into a bottle.

Aaron had given Haley everything that he had. And she couldn't even give Aaron all of her.

"Haley wanted the name Jack for Jack. I, of course, went right to Jack the Ripper. So we settled for Jackson with the nickname of Jack. I've never had a case with an UnSub named Jackson until Tera Messa. I don't think of him when I think of my son though. There is too much difference, even though Jack's only one." Aaron paused and finished off the cigarette. He looked down at the butt in his hand, a few small tenders of paper burning. Reid reached over and took the butt from his unresisting fingers, touching Aaron more than he had ever.

"Jack is yours. I could give you the science of why Jack is yours, but you don't have to worry. He's is very much your son."

Aaron slumped down. The words Thank God stuck in his throat. Reid pulled Aaron close, hugging him of sorts. Aaron welcomed the God's warmth. He stared out at the base until he couldn't any longer. Inaction wasn't doing any good for him.

"Will you go with me to confront her?" Aaron knew that Haley thought him still gone and that was
He had planned to surprise her and to tell her that he had a four day weekend for them as a family.

"Are you sure that is what you want?" Reid sounded older than Aaron in that instance. He sounded like a God for the first time ever to Aaron, and he could see what Gideon had seen him. There had still been that voice in the back of his head that Aaron was keeping Reid around for selfish reasons, as his last link to Gideon and to the only friend that he had left. Aaron thought about that harder for a few seconds, his only friends were ones that he had with Haley. His friends from college were long gone, through time and distance. Even his friends that were coworkers once upon a time were gone. Haley had slowly pulled Aaron in further to where he had no one left but those that Haley approved of. She had even been trying to get Aaron to stop hanging out with Reid after cases.

"Yes. I don't think I should drive though. Will you drive?" Aaron knew that he was in shock.

"I don't have my car with me, remember? You picked me up at that bookstore on your way in for the case."

"You can drive my car." Aaron reached into his pocket and pulled out his keys. He handed them over, his fingers shaking. Reid took them, gripping Aaron's fingers tight.

Reid pulled Aaron off the wall when he stood up, grabbing the blankets and throwing them into the shed with no care. He shut it and turned to Aaron who hadn't moved at all. Aaron let Reid guide him down to the twelfth floor before he put them on an elevator. Aaron stayed just outside the elevator on the sixth floor as Reid left him to gather up his things. Aaron watched the young God walk into Aaron's office and shut things down and pack up Aaron's things. He left Aaron's office with a briefcase in hand as well as Aaron's gun in hand.

"Do you still have the gun case in your trunk?"

"Yes."

"Good, I don't we should go armed. Is there room for my gun or should I lock it in your office?"

"There is room."

"Good. Let's go." Reid laid a hand on Aaron's shoulder and led him back into the elevator.

Aaron was lost in his head. He tried to find the point where he knew for sure that Haley started to cheat on him and he couldn't find it. Aaron thought about the prenup that she had signed and that he had even signed. It has restricted him as much as it had her. Aaron was fair, but the Hotchner holdings demanded that he be protected. Aaron had never thought that the prenup would matter. Aaron felt Reid disarming him and didn't even notice until he was pushed into the passenger seat that Reid had never asked him for the code. The code was the date of the penny that he had spent years looking for as well as the mint location. It was impossible to guess, but it seemed that Reid had been able to do just that. Aaron watched the street lights, and then the buildings pass as they made their way from Quantico to DC and the hotel that was going to be the end of life as Aaron knew it. He tried to figure out the point that Haley had stopped loving him and the only thing that he could find was that she never had.

Haley had been upset that Aaron had left the prosecutor's office. She had been upset that he had joined the FBI. Every single life choice that he had made without her decision, she had hated. Aaron realized with a few memories to help that Aaron had basically married his mother. His mother had stayed with his father because she wanted the prestige, she had seen a few bruises as the payment for launching her above what she had been. After Aaron's father had died, his mother had stayed in
society, using the name his father had made for himself to make sure that she was in all the places to be seen by everyone. Haley had wanted that. She had wanted to be attached to a man who threw his weight around. Haley had forgotten a single thing about Aaron though. He hated politics and would never have become what she wanted him to become. Aaron remembered those time that she had said he would make a good Senator for the area with his strong morals. It was so much more than her making comments, she had been trying to get him to go into politics and thought that had been the step after being a prosecutor. Aaron laughed at that a little, inside of his head because he never would have gone into politics, so Haley's dreams had been dashed before they had ever met.

"We are here," Reid said, his voice soft.

Aaron pulled out of his head and looked around. There was a valet waiting for them to get out of the car. Aaron swallowed before he put his hand on the door. The valet stepped up then and opened the door for him.

"Welcome to the Ritz-Carleton, Sir."

"Thank you," Aaron said as he stepped out.

"We will just be here short term, but please do park the car for us. We have a meeting with a couple inside and then will be going," Reid said.

"Of course, Sir," the valet said as he walked around to Reid's side of the car to take the keys.

Aaron looked up at the building. He was shocked at how calm he was. There wasn't really any anger at all. He was calm and collected. He was sad because of what Haley was doing but no angry. Aaron didn't know what he wanted to do. He didn't know what to say to Haley. Aaron followed Reid to the elevators and waited. Reid knew exactly what room she was in, that shocked him. He wondered if a friend of his told him. Aaron would ask, much later.

Reid stopped on the eighth floor, outside of a room. Given the space between the doors, it was a very expensive room. Reid reached up and knocked on the door. Aaron frowned at the knock, it wasn't a pounding, Aaron wanted to pound the door and demand, but he couldn't make himself shove the God out of the way.

"Who is it?"

Whatever Reid said it was garbled enough to make the people inside actually answer it. The door was opened up, and Aaron looked at the man who was looking back and not at them. He looked like a smarmy asshole.

"Come on in," the man said, still not looking at who was at the door.

"Hurry back and fuck me hard before I have to leave!" Haley yelled out. The man laughed, and Reid pushed past him. Finally, the man turned.

"Hey!" The man yelled. Aaron stayed back because he didn't know what he was going to do. The man tried to grab Reid, but he pushed past him. The man tried to grab Reid, but a move that Aaron had never seen before threw the man stumbling toward the bedroom door of the suite. Reid had his phone in his hand and snapped a picture of Haley naked on the bed with the man barely holding a towel up.

"HEY!" Haley yelled when the flash of the camera phone happened. She grabbed the blanket and pulled it over her body. She looked up at Reid, and there was shock on her face. "YOU!"
"Yes, Mrs. Hotchner, it's me," Reid said. He turned to look at Aaron. Aaron realized that he was inside the suite not far from the bedroom door. Haley was looking at him in shock.

"Aaron, this is the first time this has happened, I promise. I'm lonely," Haley started. She scrambled out of the bed, and the sheet that had been protecting her modesty was gone. Aaron's eyes were locked onto her hand though. Her hand that showed that she had taken off her ring.

"Who are you?" The man demanded as he grabbed a pair of pants and pulled them on. Aaron saw that they were very pricey.

"My name is Aaron Hotchner, and this is my co-worker."

"Oh, are you Haley's ex?"

"No, I'm her husband or for at least as long as it takes to get a divorce." Aaron turned and left. He hoped that Reid followed him, but no good would come of staying. Reid had a picture and Aaron would call the family attorney when he got into the car. The provisions for Haley if she cheated were horrible. Aaron hadn't thought a thing of them. He hadn't thought that Haley would ever cheat on him.

Aaron pressed the down button for the elevator but looked at the steps. There was a chance that someone would be on the elevator and would try and make small talk. Aaron took the seven steps that it took to get to the door and pushed it open. Aaron felt numb as he walked across the landing to the top step. The door didn't bang shut. Aaron stopped and was about to turn when he smelled the scent of Reid's cigarettes. Aaron sighed and started down. Reid was right behind him.

Reid said nothing as they made it down the stairs. Eight floors didn't seem like a lot even though Aaron knew that it should, even with him being a runner. He had put in a full day of work already. But when he landed on the ground floor, Aaron felt nothing.

The space on the other side of the door was clear, Aaron couldn't see anyone as he pushed the door open. He zeroed in on the doors that were his escape. Aaron was halfway across when he heard Reid cry out.

Aaron turned to see Haley near throwing Reid to the floor by his hair. She waited until he was down before she jumped on top of him and started to hit him. Reid didn't do anything to stop her.

"YOU RUINED IT!" Haley screamed as a hard slap landed across Reid's cheek. Aaron started forward, shocked at how frozen he was in defending Reid. However, halfway to them, Reid's hand went up in a stopping motion toward Aaron. Haley cocked her hand back and punched Reid hard in the jaw. "WHY COULDN'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!"

Hotel security rounded on Haley, pulling her off and someone who looked like a manager of some kind was rushing over. Aaron made it to Reid first, crouching at his side and turning his face toward him. He was going to feel all of the hits tomorrow, and he could already see a bruise forming on one side of his face, where Haley had landed her punch.

"Sir, sir, are you all right?" The manager asked.

"Reid?" Aaron asked, but Reid's eyes were slightly unseeing. There was a cloudiness to them. Aaron kept the manager back. "Call the cops. I want charges pressed on her."

"He invaded our room!"

"You opened the door and told us to come on in. Those were your direct words," Reid said as he
started to push himself up. Aaron laid a hand on his chest to push him back down. "I'm fine, Hotch. It's been a while since I've been decked by a woman."

"Get decked by women a lot in your past?"

"A few that didn't like being called vapid or not worth my time. Once one did it in front of a cop that heard every single word. When she tried to tell the cop that I had told her to spread her legs so I could see her pussy and that was why she punched me, he arrested her."

"Yeah, you're all right," Aaron said, and he let up on Reid's chest.

"If he presses charges, Aaron. I'll get him for taking a picture of me naked without my consent," Haley said where she was still between the two security guards.

"That's okay, Haley I wasn't going to press charges," Reid said as he stood up. "However, once the FBI hears about this they will have to. I'm a New God under their employ. Violence against me by the family of a member of the FBI is considered a hate crime. So it's going to come out anyway. Either today or during your divorce."

The silence of the foyer was only interrupted by the screech of a walkie-talkie. Aaron turned to see two cops entering. Security had to have called them before they had come running.

"Officers, you are not needed here but to collect evidence in room eight oh five. In Virginia, adultery is still a crime."

"If you divorce me, Aaron I swear."

"You swear what, Haley?" Aaron asked.

Haley looked scared for a minute, but she turned to look at Reid. "You and your stupid Godness. I wish Aaron would have thrown you off the team!"

"Why Haley? So you could continue to spend night after night when Aaron wasn't home in someone else's bed?" Reid asked.

"Because if you hadn't been around, he wouldn't have come home early and found out that I was pregnant."

Aaron stopped breathing. He looked at his wife, the woman he loved.

"And what would have done, Haley, if he hadn't come home?"

"Aborted him like I had the other seven." There were several seconds where Haley didn't realize what she had said, but then she did. She gasped, and tears filled her eyes. "I HATE YOU SPENCER REID. YOU ARE TAKING EVERYTHING FROM ME!"

"You took it from yourself, Haley."

"I'm going to Jessica's, Haley and getting Jack then we are are going home. I don't care where you stay tonight, but it will not be at home. Do not come home. Tomorrow my lawyer will contact you about coming and getting your things." Aaron could only feel the numbness.

The manager stepped up to Haley and looked at her before looking at the man that she had been having sex with.

"You are no longer allowed here, Sir. Nor you Madam." The manager turned to look at security.
"Escort them to their room to get their things and then escort them out." The manager turned to Reid. "Come with me to the kitchen to get you an ice pack. While your agent partner stays and waits for the cops."

Aaron watched as Reid went with the manager and the cops went with the security and Haley and her lover up to their floor to get their things. Aaron only stood there, not caring that everyone was staring at him. Aaron hoped that the lawyer could keep it all out of the papers, but he had no clue what was going to happen. He would have to notify the FBI as soon as he talked to his lawyer. Aaron pulled his phone from his pocket and scrolled through to find his lawyer's direct number. With him being on cases, he needed to call sometimes outside of the regular work hours. Aaron walked out to the valet area to wait for the car to be brought around.

"This can't be good," Carl said in lieu of a typical greeting.

"Are you in your office?"

"Yes."

"Working on something important?"

"Nothing that can't wait. What's wrong?"

"The cops in DC are collecting the bedsheet with the evidence of her extramarital affair."

"Oh, wow. Really?" Carl didn't sound gleeful, but Aaron knew that he probably saw dollar signs. This was going to get him a lot of money.

"The New God on the team, he is the one that knew."

"You know he'll be called into court?" Carl was typing away, and Aaron figured that he was starting to work on the divorce papers.

"Yes. I know."

"While I am the one managing what it is that your mother will say, I will keep this from her for as long as possible."

"Yes, yes, that's fine." Aaron didn't want his mother to know at all, but he knew that it would happen. Aaron sighed because it would mean that Maribel Hotchner would descend on Aaron's house. Aaron thought about what he could do to make sure that he wasn't there when she came but that would just mean that the man who she had taken up with would be the one to call him.

"I'll get ahold of you tomorrow. I would like to meet this Spencer Reid."

"The fact that you know his name is horrifying."

"He's part of your life, and I know everything about your life that is in the papers."

Aaron felt a hand on his shoulder, and he looked to see that the car was there and Reid was beside him. Reid had the keys in his hand, he jingled them at Aaron before walking over. There was a reusable ice pack in his hand. Aaron frowned. He opened his mouth to apologize but stopped when he saw Reid staring at him. Aaron got into the car and waited for Reid to get in and pull out.

"I will print out the image at work to give to you. I don't want to access it at home."

"Thanks. I just." Aaron leaned his head against the headrest and sighed. "Before I married Haley,
she had to sign a pretty strong prenup, because of my trust fund and the family holdings that the law firm handles. I wonder what my mother saw in her that was so close to herself that she had all of that added."

"Your father died of a heart attack."

"Yes, while going through cancer treatment but my mother married him for his money. She had to sign a very strong prenup herself." Aaron closed his eyes, trusting in Reid to get him where they needed to go.

"You have never talked about your mother before. Your father yes but never her."

"Let's table that for another time."

"Hmmm," Reid agreed.

Aaron didn't say anything else. He frowned as he thought about everything that he had to do and what he would have to do to get Jessica to give over Jack. He was sure that Haley would call her as soon as possible and demand that she not give Jack over.

"We are here," Reid said making Aaron jerk his eyes open. He looked at the house that Jessica was living in while she found an apartment. Her job had transferred her back home a few months before. Aaron looked at the window that the curtain moved on. "Do you want me to go with you?"

"Not yet. If I look at you, yes."

"Gotcha, Hotch."

Aaron opened the door and stepped out. He was still in his suit, and he knew that it made him look imposing and for once he wasn't that upset about it. Aaron was barely to the porch when the door opened. Jessica was there, looking at Aaron with a frown on her face.

"Haley didn't tell me you were back in town."

"We finished up early. I'm here to take Jack home."

"Haley isn't with you, who is that?"

"My teammate Reid. I offered him a ride home, and he said he would drive me home and then take the bus from there because I'm tired." Aaron felt nothing about lying. Jessica's phone rang, and she grabbed it. Aaron realized that she had probably brought it over.

Aaron heard Haley screaming at the top of her lungs to not give Jack over to Aaron. Jessica's eyes opened wide. Aaron just looked at her with the same expression on his face.

"What did you do?" Jessica asked, but her voice was leary.

"I caught her naked in bed in a suite with another man. In fact, when the suite room door was opened, she screamed for him to hurry back and fuck her hard before she had to leave. I had planned on surprising her with the fact that I was home early."

"She's demanding that I don't hand over Jack, but I remember well what she signed to marry you. Do you...have proof?" Jessica asked.

"The cops collected the bedsheets because it is a criminal matter. She assaulted Reid because he was with me."
"Haley has always hated him, she talks about hating him a lot because he's a New God."

"Yes, well that hate is even worse. I told her that she was not welcome at home and tomorrow my lawyer will serve her will the papers necessary for that. Jessica, I want to ask you a question, and I want the truth. Did you know that Haley was-" Aaron couldn't say the words. He looked back at Reid and Reid got out of the car and walked quickly to him. Reid's hand settled on his shoulder.

"She got you good. Look, come inside while I pack up Jack's things. He'd due to wake up at any time now. He is in a cat nap phase Haley said where he sleeps for a few hours and then wakes up and is good to go for a few hours."

Aaron allowed Jessica to back up before he started into the house, Reid right there behind him. Reid directed him over to a couch, and Aaron sat down. Aaron wanted another cigarette because he wanted a glass of scotch and he didn't need that. A cigarette was better. The sound of a baby talking to himself was heard over the baby monitor and Jessica walked to the back room where Aaron knew that Jack slept. Reid started to pack up the very visible things that went into the diaper bag that Haley had left.

Several minutes later, Jessica entered the room with Jack in hand. Jack was giggling and babbling until he saw Aaron.

"Da," Jack said, and he started to wiggle in Jessica's arms. Aaron reached out for Jack when Jessica got close enough. Jack nearly jumped into Aaron's arms.

Reid packed up the last few things and nodded to the side. Jessica followed him over to where they weren't out of earshot, but Jack would not hear them as well.

"While in the heat of a moment of anger, Haley confessed to aborting children of Aaron's before he could know that she was pregnant. Did you know anything about it?"

"No. She talked about their troubles and seemed to be upset that she wasn't getting pregnant. If she was doing that." Jessica closed her mouth and looked at Jack.

"It seems that Aaron came home early after she had taken the test and saw it. I would say that it's the only thing that stopped her from doing it with him."

"God." Jessica looked near tears. Aaron wanted to comfort her but he couldn't. He couldn't let go of Jack. "Take him home and please stay with him."

"I was going to. I don't sleep so I'll be perfectly fine taking care of Jack. He and I get along just fine."

"Pen," Jack said, and his hand was held out for Reid.

"I run warmer, and he loves to cuddle on me and keep warm." Reid smiled as he looked at Jack. Aaron was glad that Reid was there. He wouldn't be able to do this without him.
Chapter 8

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

_Humans celebrations are a lovely thing to partake of. I adore getting invited to them. America has the best celebration, and it's called Thanksgiving. I always find myself back in America during that time. Christmas I go where I feel the pull. Two years ago it was Rio. Last year was Poland. This year, I think I am going to stay home. There is someone here who needs me more than I need the pull of watching Humans and their rituals._

November 2006

Aaron sighed as he rolled over in Reid's guest room. Yesterday had been the final court day in the divorce proceedings. After Haley had blown up at the last court day and screamed about she would have rather have killed Jack while he was in the womb than have him, the judge had decided to sever all parental rights. Aaron had made sure to set it up so that Jessica and her parents would be able to visit with Jack and take him for weekends. Roy and his wife had not contacted Aaron's lawyer, but Jessica had contacted Aaron like he had asked her to. Jessica loved her nephew very much, and she was appalled by Haley.

There was a smell that had Aaron's stomach rumbling. Aaron rolled onto his back and looked up. The ceiling of Reid's bedroom was decorated with stars of various sizes. Aaron knew that all of the constellations were actual ones and if he knew Reid right, perfectly spaced to be to scale to the actual constellations.

Aaron listened to the sounds of a TV playing. He heard high pitched voices like it was a kid's show playing. Aaron sat up in bed and looked down at the pack and play that Reid had bought for Aaron to use. It was empty of Jack. Aaron hadn't even heard Jack wake up. Aaron felt terrible because he wasn't staying here to have Reid take care of Jack. Aaron slid off of the bed and grabbed the robe that Reid was letting him use. Aaron stopped at the door because there was a note.

_Hotch, please feel free to take a shower before you join Jack and I. I'll have breakfast ready as soon as you are done in the shower. There is s cup of coffee waiting on a warmer in the bathroom._

Aaron sighed again and turned around to head to the bathroom. There were three bedrooms in the apartment, and each had their own bathroom. Aaron had been shocked at that. It was nice though. Aaron liked it because he could shower and then bath Jack. Jack didn't seem to be missing Haley much at all, Aaron wondered how much Haley paid attention to him when Aaron wasn't home. Aaron thought that it might be better to not ask that question though because he wasn't sure that he wanted the answer.

The FBI had a daycare service, and at that point, Jack was being dropped off there when Aaron went to work, and if Aaron worked late or had a case, Anderson would drop Jack off to Jessica. Anderson

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was glad to pitch in on anything that was needed by Aaron, even if it was not work-related. Jessica had become a balm to Aaron's soul. She adored her nephew and made time to watch him and even drop him off at daycare and pick him up each day that Aaron was on a case if Anderson couldn't. Aaron needed to see about finding a nanny for Jack.

A quick shower later, Aaron was dressed in a pair of sweatpants and a T-shirt before he put on the robe again. He opened the bedroom door and regretted it. The smells of whatever Reid was fixing hit him and his stomach growled so loud that it made Jack laugh.

"Da," Jack said as he started to pull himself up on the coffee table. Aaron waited where he was to see if Jack would start to walk to him. So far Jack had only walked to get toys. Aaron hadn't missed his first steps, having been there with Haley but after his first steps, Jack only tottered around on his feet when he wanted something, not someone. No, he made the person come and get him if they wanted him.

Jack pushed off the coffee table and walked on steady feet toward Aaron. Aaron crouched and picked up Jack, looking around at the changes that had been made while Aaron was asleep. There were plenty of areas where Jack could walk where there was enough room between items that he could grab and hold if he started to fall. All hard surfaces and corners had soft foam things on them. Aaron marveled at it all as he stood up. He moved around the small wall that the fridge was back against to look in the kitchen. Aaron saw a turkey breast on the island and many shakers of spices arrayed around it. Reid was crouched at the oven and looking inside of it at something in a muffin pan.

"Reid?" Aaron asked as he stopped just behind the young God.

"Breakfast is ready," Reid said, but he didn't look up. Instead, he reached inside the oven with a mitt covered hand and pulled out the tray. There were what looked like blueberry muffins on one side of the pan and something that had red peppers and at least eggs in it on the other side.

"That looks wonderful, and it smells great."


"No," Reid said with a smile on his face, shaking his head back and forth in an exaggerated manner.

"Yes. Up!"

"His vocabulary of words goes up by two every single time that we come over."

Reid just grinned as he set down the pan on the counter. Reid dropped the mitt down and reached over to tickle Jack's side. Jack screeched and tried to escape, but Aaron held him right where Reid could get him. Jack leaned all of his weight over to Reid and Aaron thought for a second that he was going to fall until Reid caught him. Jack giggled as Reid lifted him up.

"You are good with kids."

"It took a while to learn it. So I stocked up on things that Jack eats the brand of baby food that you always use for him. Since we are eating turkey, I thought he might like to eat some. I've never seen you get it for him, but I wasn't sure if it was a big thing. I only got a single jar just in case."

"Why are you preparing the turkey now?" Aaron was confused because he knew that it was not good to thaw the turkey and then refreeze it without cooking it. Though Reid could be doing that, Aaron just wasn't sure why.
"I'm going to let it sit in the fridge and soak up the spices some before I cook it later."

"Isn't it early?" Aaron tried to count the days, but he swore Thanksgiving was next week.

"Hotch, today is Thanksgiving." The look that Reid gave him was one that Aaron knew well, on other people's faces when Reid didn't get something that should have been mainstream knowledge.

"What, no? That's next week!"

"No, it's today." Reid gave Aaron a smile before shaking his head. "That's why the judge wanted out of the courtroom yesterday. It's why JJ told you she would see you Monday when we left yesterday morning."

"I've been so focused on the divorce and taking care of Jack." Aaron knew that it wasn't a good excuse, but he hadn't been paying attention to Thanksgiving. Other holidays had a set date or were the X number of Monday or Sundays into the month.

"What do you normally do on Thanksgiving?" Reid asked as he settled Jack on his hip and started to pluck the muffins out of the pan. He settled three of each kind on two different plates. Aaron looked at the one plate and saw that it had ramekin salsa already on it, so he knew that it was his, it looked like the really spicy kind that Reid made himself. Aaron grabbed both plates and walked around to the other side of the island and set them down where they usually ate. There was already a cup of Reid's coffee in the one spot and a glass of orange juice in Aaron's. There was a high chair for Jack between them.

"Where did you get this?" Aaron looked at the high chair, and it was older but well cared for.

"The lady downstairs. She was getting rid of it because they aren't going to have more kids and all of hers are old enough now that they don't need it. I bought the pack and play so that you wouldn't have to worry, but I was out of using a high chair pretty young. And this one is in perfect shape, I made dinner for her and her family for it one night." Reid sat down beside Aaron with a glass of what looked like grapefruit juice in his hand. Aaron shuddered. He liked fruit, but he hated grapefruit. Reid settled Jack into the highchair before turning it to face Aaron. There was a collection of jars of food on the other side of the plates that Aaron had sat down. Enough for Jack the whole day, spread out into four meals adding in table food, Jack hadn't taken to table food well. Aaron smiled at Reid because it was kind of him to make sure that Aaron didn't worry about anything.

"I didn't answer your question, I'm sorry. Mom always had an elaborate dinner party. During college, I stayed in my rooms and worked on papers and things. After Haley and I got really serious, I started to go to her parents. Last year after Jack was just born, we still went to her parents." Aaron had been looking forward to a Thanksgiving meal that would have been just the three of them instead of packing up a new baby and carting him to and from her parents' house.

"Where is Haley staying?" Reid picked up an egg muffin and bit into it. Aaron poked at his before reaching over for the jar of apples. He opened it and grabbed the rubber covered spoon that Reid had laid out.

"The last Jessica told me, with Roy, her father." Aaron smiled at Reid as he stirred up the apples. Jack wiggled in the seat and was trying to grab the spoon before Aaron even got it up to his face.

"I forgot to get his cup out." Reid stood up before Aaron could even tell him to stay still and eat. He had the egg muffin in one hand and held it up to his face to eat it as he walked around the island. Aaron reached over for a blueberry muffin and took a bite. Jack babbled, and Reid turned around to smile at him.
"What are your plans today? I should head back to my apartment and scrounge up something for me to eat since you've already taken care of Jack for the day."

Reid made a noise that Aaron had never heard from him before. It was almost like a snort but not entirely. Reid dropped the blueberry muffin he was getting ready to take a bite out of.

"Hotch, I did not buy a six-pound turkey breast for myself. I have a broccoli casserole in the fridge ready to be cooked. I thought you could do mashed potatoes. Unless you don't want to stay here for Thanksgiving. I mean this is your first with it just being you and Jack."

"Yes, and I will gladly stay here. What do we have for dessert?"

"Pumpkin pie, what else?"

"My mom used to have the cook make a sweet potato casserole. Haley's family all hated sweet potatoes." Aaron really missed that, and he knew that Reid was up for anything new.

"Really? Hmm." Reid set down Jack's sippy cup before he wandered over toward the cabinet that had food containers in it before. He opened the door, and Aaron saw that the top shelf had cookbooks in it. American southern cookbooks. Aaron ducked his head and chuckled. It seemed that Aaron's love of his home food was making Reid curious. Reid grabbed a book and flipped through it until he landed on a page. He pulled down three more and flipped to pages before stacking them on top of each other, opened up. Reid walked around to where he was in front of Aaron but on the other side of the island, and he set down the books. Aaron heard a door open, but Reid didn't open a door. The next thing, Reid stepped up and sat down on the island, with his legs crossed. "Which one of these?"

Reid laid out the four books and flipped them around to where Aaron could look at the four recipes for sweet potato casserole. Aaron pulled the first closer to himself before he fed Jack a few more bites of apples. There was a jar of sweet potatoes on the island for Jack and Aaron thought about fixing them up with some added things and seeing if Jack liked them. Aaron was looking forward to doing a full Thanksgiving dinner with Jack. Reid handed over a bag of soft looking food bites.

"What are these?" Aaron asked. He opened the bag, and the smell of muffin hit him.

"I baked those first. I wasn't sure if you had actually had tried blueberries with him, so I baked little drops before I made the muffins."

"For Jack?" Aaron asked. He grabbed a few and set them down on the tray in front of Jack. Jack reached out and grabbed a few as Aaron readied another bite of apples. Aaron left Jack to his own devices on eating the muffin bits as he looked at the recipe, actually reading it. Aaron grabbed the next one and then the next. The final one was the one that was like what Aaron remembered eating. "This one."

"Okay, well I have most everything for this. It can be made ahead and warmed up just before so that it doesn't take as long to warm up."

"What are you missing?"

"Sweet potatoes," Reid said it like he was saying that he was missing a spice that could be possibly filled with another. Aaron laughed. Reid looked up at him with a weird look on his face. "What?"

"It's hard to make sweet potato casserole without sweet potatoes."

"There is a little market around the corner. I have a key. Several residents have keys just in case they
forget something on the holiday or are like me and cook at night. I drop money on the register with a note of what I bought."

"You find the most interesting people."

"I just talk to them. There is nothing wrong with talking to people." Reid was blushing a little. He ducked his head to look at the recipe again, even though Aaron knew that he knew it from his first read. Aaron grabbed an egg muffin off of Reid's plate and handed it over. Reid's hand tried to grab it, but Aaron pulled it back until Reid finally looked up at him.

"What's with sitting on the furniture? I've seen you do it on desks in stations."

"Mom used to make me sit on the coffee table when she was cleaning. I would sit on desks in college because it made it easier to work with things if they were scattered around me. I can not do it if you want." Reid started to slide backward on the island, but Aaron's hand reaching out to grab his calf stopped him.

"No, it doesn't bother me, and this is your place. I can't tell you not to do something. It was just something I have never seen anyone do before and I was curious." Aaron smiled up at him before going back to eating. The salsa was just spicy enough to make Aaron need several drinks of his orange juice while eating. Aaron couldn't place the salsa though, what spices it had in it. After finishing off his orange juice, Aaron went to get a refill and found the pitcher with the orange juice in the fridge but behind it was a container of the salsa. It was one of Reid's storage containers, meaning that Reid had made it fresh for Aaron. Aaron turned around to look at the young God, whose head as still buried in the book, looking at the same page he had been. Reid's head would dart up to check on Jack, he even fed him a bite of apple before going back one time, all the while Aaron stared at him.

Aaron didn't know how long he stood there and stared at Reid. It wasn't hard to see that the young God cared for Aaron. Hell, Aaron thought that he would never have liked Reid after the way he had been brought onto the team. So much had changed in the two years.

"Do you need to talk about yesterday?" Reid didn't look up as he asked the question.

"Want to? No. Need to? Yes. But after Jack has gone down for a nap. I don't like to talk about Haley with him around, even at his age." Aaron walked around the counter and sat down. He laid a few more pieces of the muffin down, and Jack reached and grabbed one but also grabbed the sleeve of Aaron's robe. Aaron laughed as Jack held on tight.

"I just need to get one thing off of my chest. She didn't fight the custody thing. She didn't even ask for visitation. Why?" Reid sounded genuinely upset about that. Probably trying to figure out how Haley had become what she had when his own mother was like she was, even with her sick, Reid was the center of her world.

"You heard what she said that day. She was okay doing that. She didn't want a kid. I'm shocked she didn't do something to him in the womb. When we married, I told her I wanted kids. Three was the number that I wanted. We kept putting it off because she said it wasn't the time. Then we tried for a while and stopped. Tried for a while and stopped. Then this last time. I don't know what to feel about what she did, I'm still processing it."

"I'm here." Reid's tone was gentle, and it was so much like him. Reid gave a lot and got little in return from the rest of the team. Aaron hated that, but there wasn't a lot he could do until the team had actually warmed up to him.

"Yes, as Doctor Spencer Reid, Psychologist or friend?" Aaron asked, and he regretted the bitter tone
of his voice as soon as he heard it. Reid deflated and didn't say a word. He slid backward off the counter before Aaron could stop him. Aaron stood up, but Jack had a tight hold on his robe and Aaron didn't want to jerk it out of his son's hold and make him cry. Aaron tried to coax the boy into letting go, and it took too long. Just as Aaron freed the robe, he heard the click of Reid's bedroom door and lock. Aaron sat back down and finished feeding Jack. Aaron looked at the turkey sitting there.

Aaron thought about maybe he should leave. Let Reid do what he usually did and not have to worry about entertaining an asshole co-worker and his one-year-old son. Aaron found a soft rag laying on the side of the sink. It had been pulled from the diaper bag. Aaron warmed up the water from the spigot and washed off Jack's sticky fingers. Reid had been nothing but nice to him, letting him stay at the apartment instead of going home to a house that no longer felt like home when Aaron didn't want to be alone.

Reid didn't deserve what Aaron said. Reid had never made Aaron feel like he was being psychoanalyzed. Hell, most of the time, Aaron forgot that Reid even had a degree to work as a psychologist. Aaron had no clue how the young God had time to finish it right before joining the Academy. It had come in handy during their work on occasion. Aaron walked back to the door that led to Reid's room. Aaron had never been inside the room. He'd never even looked inside.

Aaron knocked on the door, but no sound came from inside. Aaron sighed. "Reid." Aaron knocked again. The door opened, and Aaron was greeted with the sight of Reid pulling a sweater over his head. Reid also had on a pair of jeans. Aaron wasn't sure when he had ever seen him in jeans, if ever. He was always dressed in a nice but quirky suit with a vest. He never wore a coat, but given what Aaron knew about his body temperature, Aaron knew why.

"Yes?" Reid asked with a smile on his face. There was nothing in his eyes that showed he was upset. He was one of the best actors in the world when he wanted to be.

"I'm sorry."

"No need to be sorry. You didn't mean it, and I knew that. I just needed a few minutes to calm down."  

"There was still no need for me to say it. You never make me feel like you are psychoanalyzing me. Obviously, I'm not in a mood that will make me good company. I should go but if you want I can come back tonight for dinner."

"Don't please," Reid begged, his voice taking on a tenor that Aaron had never heard before.

"Don't come back for dinner or don't leave?" Aaron asked because he wanted to be sure of what he was doing. He didn't want to upset Reid, but he didn't want to make him upset by staying and staying in a bad mood. Reid didn't know much about the court date. He had offered to watch Jack for him while Aaron was in court. Jessica was called a witness so she couldn't. Aaron had a picture of Reid at his desk with Jack in his lap as Jack played with toys and Reid worked from JJ. And even a picture of Reid on the roundtable room on his back with Jack in the air. Aaron hadn't asked what game they were playing then.

"Don't leave."

"Okay, I won't."

The smile that Aaron got from Reid from those three simple words made Aaron's heart ache. Aaron saw the fragileness underneath the God's hard exterior. He saw for the first time the loneliness.
"How about you run down and get the sweet potatoes and I'll clean up from breakfast? After you finish eating."

Reid nodded and walked around Aaron, leaving him staring into Reid's room. It was cluttered much like the living room had been. The stacks of books in the living room that used to go to the ceiling were gone, replaced with bookshelves that went up that high. There was an old-timey looking ladder on wheels that Aaron used to see in movies in libraries and such that allowed Reid access to the books on top. Aaron saw it for what it was for the first time. It wasn't Reid's want to make the place look better. He had been in the apartment for a long time, and the books had only gotten bigger. No, it was a want to make the place safer for Jack so that Aaron would actually come over and not fear for his son. Aaron had never thought of Reid as lonely, but he was, and he was trying to cling to the single friend that he had.

Aaron vowed to make it the best Thanksgiving that Reid had ever had.
Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

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From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Wanting to not be alone when the world is celebrating joy is always a big issue. Gods are social creatures. While there are some who have chosen to not be, all of them on an instinctual level are social creatures. When human joy is at it's high, we Gods feel it. Even if we are just with a few other Gods or even a few friends, we feel better. To celebrate another year of living without fading away in human memory, we don't want to be alone.

Sometimes the act of sharing even a few hours in that time makes us feel like we are sharing with the world.

December 2006

Aaron groaned as he laid in bed. He heard Jack babbling to himself in the baby monitor, but as he sounded like he was fine, Aaron didn't need to get out of bed. He was okay listening to his son talk to himself while Aaron just laid there. Getting back at midnight from a case that had ended horribly was not how Aaron wanted to spend Christmas. The jet ride home had been silent. Morgan was lost in his music, Reid in his books, and JJ and Prentiss had talked about their favorite Christmases. Aaron had soaked it all in. They were in between agents again, the last only lasting five cases before quitting.

The smell of vanilla hit Aaron's nose, and he looked at the candle that was on the bedside table and frowned. He hadn't lit it the night before because he was afraid of fire. The smell had to come from somewhere else. Aaron shoved himself up and out of bed. He walked to the safe slowly and opened it up, cursing the beeps as he pressed the numbers to open it. He almost had his hand on the gun when he heard a voice through the baby monitor.

"Daddy is sleeping late, huh?" Reid asked Jack. There was the sound of a spring from the couch groaning as pressure was put it on it as someone got up. Reid had taken Jack and the monitor into the living room. "That's okay. I have breakfast already and look at all of those presents. I bet a few have your name on them. I saw Santa leaving a few for your Dad as well. I bet he's going to be surprised that Santa visited him this year."

Aaron frowned because there had not been a single present under the tree the night before. Aaron had planned on setting them all out before he got Jack out of bed. Aaron looked over at the closet and saw that it was open, just like it had been the night before, but now there were no presents inside. Aaron cursed Reid silently for being so sneaky. The God was living up to his name of being a God, sneaky and underhanded and making humans dance to their tune. Thankfully, the only tune that Reid wanted anyone to dance to was happiness, especially Aaron.

Grabbing his sleep pants and shirt that JJ had bought him as his Christmas gift Aaron quickly got
dressed. As Aaron opened the bedroom door, he realized that Reid had talked about seeing Santa. If humans had created Gods with their belief, had they also created Santa? Aaron didn't want to think about it.

"DADA!" Jack screeched as he saw Aaron come off the steps. Aaron's robe was hanging over the back of the couch where he had left it days before. Aaron saw Jack in Reid's lap, dressed in an adorable little suit.

"With the nanny hunt and cases, I know you hadn't had the chance for a holiday picture. I brought my camera with me if you wanted me to take one."

"I will change after breakfast. Have you and Jack ate?"

"Yes, he was hungry, and he wouldn't eat unless I was."

Jack was jumping up and down on Reid's lap, trying to get his attention. Aaron reached over Reid's head and picked up Jack. Jack started to squeal and wiggle in Aaron's hands.

"Dow," Jack said. Aaron frowned but put him down. Even Reid was having trouble getting Jack to get the n's in words down. Jack took off so fast that Aaron was sure that he was going to go down. Aaron reached out to grab him, but Jack went right around the couch and went right for the tree.

"Jack," Aaron said, but Reid raised his hand. Aaron frowned, but Jack grabbed a shiny red box between his hands and started back to Aaron. Aaron came around the couch and met him there.

"DA!" Jack proclaimed as he held up the present. Aaron took it and picked up Jack at the same time. He sat down with Jack in his lap at the other end of the couch from where Reid was and looked at his friend and glared at him.

"What's this?" Aaron asked Jack as he settled the boy down onto his lap. Aaron looked at the tag and saw that it from Jack. Aaron glared because he knew that Jessica had already bought a few presents for Aaron from Jack, but those had been opened the night before Aaron had gone on the case. It was Reid's writing. Aaron opened the first side of the package. Jack was giggling hard like he knew what was in there. Aaron smiled at Jack. Aaron took his time opening the wrapping paper on the box. It wasn't hard to know that it was a tie. The box could only be that because it wouldn't be jewelry.

Jack took the paper from Aaron and started to play with it as Aaron lifted the lid off of the box. There was black tissue paper inside that Aaron parted. The tie inside was exquisite. Aaron could tell that it was handmade by someone who knew their craft well.

"I can't accept this, Reid." Aaron tried to imagine the price that Reid had paid for it.

"I paid nothing for it. It was a gift to me from a dear friend, but I don't like silk ties."

"They aren't going to mind?"

"No. They died a while ago."

"Then I shouldn't take this." Aaron tried to shove the box over.

"Ties like that are meant to be worn, and I won't wear it. He would rather see it on someone than hanging in my closet."

"I'll wear it then. Next case." Aaron lifted the tie out and thought about what it would look good. He knew of a perfect charcoal grey suit and a blinding white shirt of his that it would look perfect on.
Reid was smiling. Aaron thought about the few gifts that he had tucked away in his go bag. He had been hiding them in it for a while for Reid. He hadn't wanted to give him the gifts at the party that had been at JJ's apartment. Reid had tried to use the same excuse that he had the year before that he was going home to Vegas to spend the holiday, but JJ hadn't let him out of it this time. Aaron was glad for it.

Garcia had warmed to Reid the rest of the way after they had spent an hour discussing various hacks that she had done and he even talked about methods that would help her hack better. Aaron had ignored that. Aaron still had no clue what the basis of her fear or dislike of the God was, but she seemed to be over it enough to act like a decent person. Morgan hadn't thawed any on him on a personal basis, but when it came to work, Morgan seemed to be okay with working with him.

"So what is for breakfast?" Aaron asked.

"Frittatas."

Aaron looked toward the kitchen, but he couldn't smell anything other than the ham. The big meal was going to be lunch, Reid had already planned it all out. Aaron stopped trying to tell him that he was making too much for just the two of them with Jack only eating small bits of some of the softer foods after Reid had glared at him for ten minutes on the jet on the way home. Reid had already had one of the college students go shopping for him to get the things that he didn't have. Aaron hadn't been able to tell him no. Aaron just hadn't expected it to happen at his house.

"How did you guess my code?"

"It wasn't that hard, Aaron. Not for me."

"Well, I added a code for you." Aaron leaned over, holding onto Jack a little tighter as he pushed the boy forward some. Aaron grabbed the envelope in the little drawer in the coffee table. He tossed it into Reid's lap. "The code is the first fifteen digits of Pi."

Reid frowned at the envelope before he finally picked it up and opened it. Aaron expected the frown to go away, but it didn't, it deepened. Aaron wasn't sure why.

"But I like breaking into your house."

Aaron started to laugh. Reid looked truly put out. For once, Aaron saw the young man that he was instead of the young God. Jack wiggled in Aaron's lap, and Aaron set him down on the floor. Jack didn't go for the presents but instead the large blanket that was on the floor with toys on it. Aaron recognized it as the one that had been a gift from Jessica at his and Haley's wedding. Jack dropped down to start to play with the toys that were scattered all over it.

Leaving Reid to pout about having a way to get into Aaron's house without having to break in, Aaron went to the kitchen to find his frittata on a plate in the oven with the ham. Aaron pulled the plate out and saw that there was a note attached to the knob on the stove asking him to raise the temperature when he got the food out. Aaron ripped off the note and turned up the heat in the oven. There was a jar of Reid's homemade salsa in the fridge from when Reid had done tacos a few weeks before. Aaron dug that out and coated his frittata in it. He grabbed the fork that was sitting on a napkin and leaned against the counter and looked out into the living room. Reid had set the envelope on the coffee table, and Aaron had no clue if the key was in it or not but Reid himself was seated on the floor at the edge of the blanket. He had a book in his lap and was reading. Jack started to set toys down on the book, and Reid just shifted the toys off into his lap and laid the book on his leg.

Reid held out his free hand, and Jack set a ball down into it. It was a large, for Jack, nerf ball. Reid
never looked up from his book, but he rolled the ball on the ground. Jack took off like a dog after it, and Aaron almost yelled at Reid that Jack was not a dog that would play fetch except for he watched how Jack started to run so fast that he fell. Jack didn't cry at all, and he didn't crawl after the ball. Instead, he picked himself up and moved after the ball at a slower but still fast pace. Aaron's mouth dropped open, and he almost let the food inside fall out. Aaron wondered if this was what Reid and Jack got up to when Aaron was working in his office or such when at the office. The lady who ran the daycare usually dropped Jack off to Aaron around six and sometimes it wasn't quite time for Aaron to leave yet so Reid would take care of Jack.

"Reid, have you been teaching Jack to fetch?" Aaron asked when he swallowed his bite of food. Reid raised up a hand and made a so-so gesture with it. Aaron chuckled and looked at the tree. There were more presents under there than Aaron knew that he had bought, so Reid had to have added a lot of them to the pile.

"Pen!" Jack exclaimed, drawing Aaron's eyes back to the duo. Reid was holding onto the ball while Jack was trying to tug it away from him. Reid waited until Jack relaxed his tug and then he let go of the ball. Jack tossed the ball all of eight inches away from himself before he pointed. Reid looked at the ball and grinned.

Aaron set down his plate to find something to drink. Reid had made Aaron a spicy salsa and with the spices in the frittata already, it was a bit much even for Aaron. He was still enjoying it, but he needed a drink. There was a new gallon of milk in the fridge and Aaron grabbed it to fill up a glass. Aaron drank half of the glass before he turned around to look back into the living room. Jack was tottering after a ball that was moving too slow and too steady for it to have been rolled. When it stopped and Jack just barely got his fingers onto it, and it started rolling again, Aaron knew that something was up.

There was talk of Gods who had the power to do weird things. Telekinesis like things was actually normal but never too controlled. More like the God got angry, and things happened. Aaron watched Jack chase after a very slow moving ball as Reid read a book.

Aaron heard something move behind him and he turned, expecting Peaches to be there. The pixie had been following Reid to Aaron's house for weeks. It wasn't Peaches though. No this was a female pixie. Aaron held out his hand, and the Pixie looked at him a little unsure before she hopped up into Aaron's hand. Aaron cut a piece of his frittata off that had no salsa on it and offered it to the Pixie. She reached out and took a small bite of it before she started to devour it. Aaron scraped more salsa off a piece and cut it off before holding it up for her. The piece was bigger, so she used both hands to hold it as she took bites.

"Reid, what do Pixie's drink?" Aaron asked.

"Depends on where they grew up and the family. Just ask. I'm sure that Peaches will tell you what he wants." Reid didn't even look up from his book as he answered.

"Milk please," the pixie said with a smile on her face.

"RI!" Jack nearly yelled. The boy stopped chasing the ball and took off toward Aaron. Reid looked up and narrowed his eyes at the scene that Jack was making with him near jumping up and down at Aaron's feet. The pixie jumped out of Aaron's hand and landed on Jack's head.

"Interesting," Reid said as he stood up and walked into the kitchen area. He didn't get too close to the pixie, but he did pick up Jack and stand him on the counter. "Is that your name little one?"

"Yes," Ri answered.
"You are very pretty and very young."

"I'm a child companion, Mister God."

Reid glared at the pixie, and she blushed a little. She made a motion. Aaron knew it from other kids that he had got to know over the years. She was zipping her mouth shut and locking it before throwing away the key. The pixie knew something, and she was keeping it from Reid.

"I think you are just what Jack needs. I'll make you a proper nest in Jack's room before I leave tonight. What's your favorite color?" Reid had his thinking face on.

"Green. Jack gave me a blanket."

"That's what happened to that," Aaron said because he knew of a green blanket of Jack's that had disappeared. Aaron hadn't looked too hard in hiding spot in Jack's room because he assumed it had been lost out and about between three different people taking care of Jack on a daily basis.

"Sorry, Sir. He covered me up with it one day when I was napping in the sun and hiding from the lady who smells like lavender."

Aaron tried to think who that would be.

"Jessica. She smells like lavender to me as well. I think it's a created creature thing."

"She's his imaginary friend that isn't imaginary."

"Of sorts. I would assume that Jack created her because of Peaches. It's actually pretty normal. Most imaginary friends disappear as the children age up. I know a few that keep the friend for their entire lives. And usually, it happens when one is Jack's age and makes a friend."

"So Jack is going to have Ri the rest of his life?"

"Possibly?" Reid shrugged his shoulders as he said it.

"What's your favorite food?" Reid asked as he held out a hand to allow Ri to jump into it. Jack started to pout a little but Reid lowered his hand down, and Ri jumped from Reid's hand to Jack's shirt. She clung to his tie, and Jack started to giggle.

"I like macaroni and cheese, Sir."

"You can call me Pen just like Jack does. However, I don't think that you calling Hotch Dad will work. Do you want to call him Hotch or Aaron?"

"Hotch. I like that name. I'm going to have Jack play in the living room until it's time for pictures. I'll make sure he doesn't get dirty." Ri climbed up the tie and settled on Jack's shoulder. It wasn't long before Reid picked up Jack and set him down on the floor. Jack tottered off into the living room with Ri right there on his shoulder.

"So, I have another mouth to feed?" Aaron asked. He didn't care about it, and it made him happy that Jack would have a friend, but he wasn't sure what he was going to tell Jessica.

"Not really. She eats very little and will most likely steal food from Jack's plate, making a game of it. She'll only be visible to those that she wants to be seen by. I assume that me being around made her want to be seen by me and you by extension."

"Will she get any bigger?"
"No. She'll stay the size she was manifested as."

"Do I have anything to fear from her?"

"No. The only time that she will try and talk Jack into doing something that you don't say if she feels it's best for both of you. Which is usually rare and will only really happen when he's a teenager if she sticks around that long."

"So kids create their imaginary friends and then they just disappear when they are done?"

"Not all of them. Some will find a new person and go with them if they know that their first kid is getting to the age where it's a good time to leave. Some go to younger siblings. It depends on the friend and the child. There are some that are so entrenched in the life of their child that they stay with them and watch over them for the rest of their lives without them knowing. That's when a friendship creature become a guardian angel."

"You know the number of things we think we know about the world is very small."

"Yes, well. If you wanted to know everything that goes bump in the night, I could tell you."

"Is Nessie real?" Aaron looked away from where Jack was playing with Ri and looked at Reid's face. He wanted to know if Reid was lying or not and he still hadn't got the hang of that.

"Yes." Reid didn't look any different than he ever did and Aaron curse the young God for his ability to hide all of his emotions.

"So what are we eating today?" Aaron asked trying to see Reid would allow him to change the subject.

"Ham, scalloped potatoes, cranberry salad, and glazed sweet potatoes. I made a section of the cranberry salad without anything in it other than mandarin oranges for Jack. The sweet potatoes he can eat as well as the scalloped potatoes. I didn't know if you wanted peas or not but I have them in the freezer if you do."

"Jack loves peas, so I say yes, peas are a good idea."

"Good. I also have an apple pie for later tonight when we do leftovers."

"Do you really just like cooking?" Aaron asked because he knew that Reid liked to cook for himself but teach of these meals that Reid had done for them was wonderful and Reid could never be talked out of it. However, that didn't mean that Reid liked cooking for them. He could think that Reid thought that Aaron couldn't take care of him and Jack."

"I like cooking yes, and it's fun to cook for more than one, even if I don't have as many leftovers. You like whatever I cook and watching Jack try new things is kind of awesome."

Aaron nodded. "I'm going to go and shower, and then we can get pictures out of the way. I don't know where you found that outfit, but it's adorable on him."

"You need a good picture of the two of you to be able to give out to those who want it."

Aaron smiled at Reid before he turned to leave to head back into his room and get a shower in. Aaron grabbed the tie and laid out the suit that he wanted to wear it with. It would do good for Reid to see him in it and if the young God wanted a copy of that picture to keep for himself, Aaron wasn't going to say a thing.
Shower running to warm up, Aaron set about shaving and doing everything else that he needed to. The shower was quick as Aaron didn't feel a huge need to get clean just to hang around the house with Reid and Jack all day long.

Aaron heard the phone ring as he draped his tie over his shoulders and moved to answer it but he heard Reid get it first.

"Hotchner residence," Reid said.

Aaron left his tie where it was and exited his bedroom to head down the stairs. Reid was in the kitchen with a towel over one shoulder, and the phone pressed between his cheek and his other shoulder.

"Oh, well Mrs. Hotchner, your son is in the shower." Reid paused, and Aaron could only guess at what his mother was saying. Aaron had never known of her to call him without doing it through her younger lover. "No, Ma'am. I don't know how long he is going to be in the shower." Reid paused again, and Aaron closed his eyes. "Considering that I am not certain of your son's sexuality beyond he had a wife that was cheating on him with many men over many years and aborted seven children from her womb without telling her husband, I don't think that I care if you don't like that I am here. You never even asked who I was, Ma'am. My name is Doctor Spencer Reid." Reid paused again, and Aaron actually entered the kitchen. He could see Reid standing at the stove with a frown on the edge of his mouth. "Oh, so you don't know who I am? Well, let me spell it out for you, Mrs. Hotchner. I am a member of the BAU. Do you know what that is? Oh, good, you do. I am also the resident God of Psychology for the whole of America. Oh, that makes you uncomfortable. Well, do you want to know what makes me uncomfortable about this? It's that you seem to want to yell at your son on Christmas about divorcing the woman who wanted nothing from your son but a trip to the Governor's chair or the Hill as a member of Congress when he didn't want it. When you actually give a fuck about what your son is going through, please call back, Mrs. Hotchner. Oh, and please have a Merry Christmas."

Aaron didn't move until he heard the beep of Reid hanging up the cordless phone. Aaron wasn't sure what he felt about what Reid said to his mother. However, he did not want to speak to her on Christmas on a good day much less with her thinking that he needed to get back together with Haley.

The divorce had made the papers due to the fact that a court reporter had caught wind of the main reasons why the divorce had gone through the courts like it had. It had not brought a lot of trouble down on Aaron, but from what Jessica was telling Aaron it was bringing a lot of problems for Roy and his wife. Haley's punishment had been the extent of the law for adultery which was a fine of two hundred and fifty dollars, but Aaron didn't care about that. She had been charged with it and found guilty. However, for her assault of Reid without provocation, she had been sentenced to a year in a minimum security women's prison. That was going to be harder to get out of even though she had already started the repeal process. Reid hadn't been the one to press charges, but the FBI had as soon as Aaron's divorce proceedings ended. Haley had admitted to what she did in open court. Reid had not testified, but that was more to do with being in Utah at the time than anything else. The hotel had gladly handed over the footage of the night.

"I don't think I have ever heard anyone say the word fuck to my mother. Or tell someone Merry Christmas but make it sound like a death threat."

"I'm multi talented. She called, and before I could even say who I was, she started telling you how much you had messed up her life and how she had been unable to go into public since the scandal of your divorce. Then she told me to go get him hopefully after you had washed every sin covering your body from our liaison once she realized that she didn't have you on the phone. I didn't mess
anything up did I?" Reid seemed like he would feel upset if he had but Aaron knew that look on his face. He really wouldn't be.

"No, Mother is in a world of her own, and she's why Sean is so messed up. I've not heard from him since he left Georgetown before graduating. I've got the word out to every single office around the country, but I will not search for him if he doesn't want me to. However, if he gets in trouble, I've got eyes out."

"That's horrible. I could put a word out, and someone will find him. We Gods are Gods to everyone you know and well you know lost causes are a favorite of a few."

"No, but thank you. I don't think you were in the office that day he came in. Elle, Garcia, and JJ didn't know who he was and I heard from someone else that he looked nothing like me and they weren't even sure that they thought we were brothers until Sean screamed at me across the office. I still don't know if that it's a good thing that they thought we were alike until he yelled."

"It was probably more the look on his face more than the actual yelling. You don't yell. He probably was wearing your angry face. You need to finish eating. I heated up your frittata again. I won't have you go hungry on Christmas on my watch." Reid laughed when second later his stomach growled. Aaron laughed and took his plate from Reid when he handed it over. Reid grabbed a banana from the fruit bowl on the side of the fridge before peeling it and taking a huge bite.

"Eat all of them if you want. Jessica bought them, but I'm not a big plain banana eater. I will cut them up for my oatmeal, and that's about it."

Reid grinned as he chewed before he looked back at the stove. Aaron saw that he was browning the sides of the sweet potatoes a little before placing them in a dish at the side of the stove. Aaron looked into the dish and saw that there was some kind of sauce in it. Aaron took his plate over and leaned onto the counter to look at Reid for a second. Reid was flipping a potato when Aaron struck. He reached out and dipped his finger into the sauce. Aaron wasn't quick enough on getting his hand away though as the tongs that Reid had been using cracked off of the back of his hand. Aaron didn't stop pulling his hand away though and stuck his finger into his mouth.

"I could drink that like it is."

"Well, you will be wearing it if you stick your fingers into it again, Sir."

Aaron grinned at him and reached over to grab a paper towel to dry his hand off after he washed it. He needed to get ready for the picture. "Do you want to get Jack ready while I tie my tie?"

"Sure. Then we can open presents." Reid settled the last of the potatoes into the dish before opening the oven and slipping it inside. He set a timer and turned to Aaron and grinned again, taking the last bite of the banana.

This was a friendship that Aaron ever thought he would have, with a human or a God but it was damned perfect for him. He kind of wished that he had a friend like Reid growing up. It would have been so much better. Aaron might not have even married Haley if he had a friend like Reid. Which while he wouldn't have had Jack and that would hurt, he might have had the three kids that he wanted and a woman that loved him for who he was. There was no use thinking about what might have been, but Aaron couldn't help thinking for a few seconds. He didn't want to ever give up Jack though. He loved his son more than the world itself.
Chapter 10

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Evil is a wholly human concept. Nature knows nothing of evil, there is balance between chaos and order. The God of War isn't evil, he is the chaos that throws balance out of order to find a few way to balance. In my long years of being alive, I am shocked again and again by the evil that humanity does itself.

Aristotle once said evil brings men together. I can't fault him his logic because it does. Either it's two evil men brought together, or it's two good men going to fight that evil. It's the foundation of the peacekeepers of the world, and yet it seems like it's never enough because humans just figure out a new way to be evil to each other.

March 2007

Aaron entered the diner first, sitting down at a table at the back with a line of sight on the man that Reid was going to be sitting and talking with. Reid's hair was covering the earwig as he finally entered the diner. Reid went right to the man's table and sat down.

The man's head lifted up from where he had been looking at his milkshake. Morgan was chattering in Aaron's ear about this still being a bad idea. Aaron had made sure that the only audio feed that was going to Reid's earwig was if Aaron said anything.

"Do you mind if I sit here?"

The man looking at Reid jumped a little as he took in Reid. A waitress stepped up to the table.

"Here you go sweetie," the waitress said as she sat down a menu.

"You should try one of Fat Sam's milkshakes."

"Oh, do you have strawberry?" Reid asked.

"Yes, we do, Honey. I'll get you an extra large one."

"Fries and a burger too, please. Cheese, bacon, and onion. Largest fry you have. Thank you so much." Reid handed back the menu to the waitress with a smile on his face.

"What's your name?" the man asked.

"Spencer Reid."

"Spencer, from the court name for the steward. Old French. Reid is of Scottish origin."

"You have a hobby with names, don't you?" Reid asked.

"Yes. I'm Frank."

"From the Germanic name for the Franks of the Frankish Empire. It became synonymous with being a free man," Reid said.
"I'm impressed. How did you know that?"

"I have hobbies in learning everything. I have an eidetic memory and read twenty thousand words per minute."

"So you are not from around here?"

"No, I'm with the FBI. The Behavioral Analysis Unit."

"You didn't disappoint your parents did you?"

"No, I did. My father left me with my mother when I was ten years old because I didn't fit in with the other kids. So I kept on getting Ph.D.'s to spite him." Reid smiled at the waitress as she set down a large glass with a milkshake in it. Reid leaned over and grabbed the straw from the table as he licked at the whipped cream on top. "So Frank, where is she?"

"That's direct."

"I don't like to beat around the bush."

"Why did they send you, the youngest member of the team?" Frank asked.

"Because they wanted to see what you would do."

"I'm going to get up and leave when my milkshake is done, and you are going to let me."

"It's polite manners to wait until the entire table is done eating before getting up and leaving. So why don't we make that when I am done eating?" Reid asked.

Frank laughed, but he nodded. Reid gave him a grin, and Aaron knew that whatever Frank thought he had against them was not going to go the way that he thought it would.

Aaron looked out at the mob that wanted to kill Frank for taking Sheriff Georgia Davis. Reid had talked to three officers, and two additional FBI agents had come to help the BAU before sending them off on an errand. Aaron hadn't asked, but Morgan had, and Reid had ignored him. Aaron knew that Morgan was going to have issues with this case for a few days and his report wasn't going to be nice in his evaluation in Reid. He never was, but Reid got them results.

"I thought I had seen the very worst of what humanity had to offer until you."

"How did you find me?"

"That's a long process. It started when George called the BAU wanting help. It ends when you leave here. Our last Unit Chief had a file on you, and it was long, but he had never found a body that was so fresh."

Reid leaned back in his seat as the food was delivered to the table. Reid nodded at Aaron and Aaron stood up to start to clear the place. Frank looked out at the mass of cops that were near riot stage. Aaron knew that it wasn't going to go well.

"Agent Prentiss found George a few moments ago."

Aaron's phone rang, but he let it go to voicemail. A text came next. It was Prentiss, and she had found George. Just as the last of the people inside the diner was going out, two cops stormed in along with George's husband. Then all of their pagers started to go off.
"The thing is that you think you have the upper hand with the school bus."

Aaron's mouth dropped open as he heard Reid's words.

"With the rising coyote population, those poor children," Frank said.

"Take me to where the kids are?" Reid asked.

"Just me and you and Jane."

Reid smiled he stood up and smiled at Aaron before he turned around and looked at Frank. Aaron let the words that Frank said wash over him. Morgan was listening, and Morgan would make the cops do what was needed to be done. Aaron only cared about the kids.

Watching Reid get into the SUV with Frank and Jane was most harrowing part of his life. Aaron didn't know what to do as he waited for the call.

Morgan paced a hole in the floor inside of the Sheriff's station. JJ was at Quantico and between her and Garcia Prentiss or Morgan's cell phone went off every few minutes with a want of information.

When Aaron's phone rang, Aaron nearly dropped it. It was Reid's cell phone.

"Hotchner," Aaron said even though he wanted to say more than that.

"I've got the kids, and they are all safe. Frank and Jane are dead. I'll text the coordinates." Reid hung up before Aaron could ask anything.

Aaron looked up at Morgan and Prentiss who looked at Aaron with their hearts in their throats.

"I've got the coordinates of where Reid and the kids are. The kids are fine."

Aaron programmed the coordinates into the SUV, and he pushed Morgan off of driving it. Aaron couldn't think about anything other than the fact that Frank and Jane were dead. Aaron wasn't sure why or how that had happened. He hoped that it didn't happen in front of the kids. The lights of the SUV flashed over two kids laughing and when Aaron came all the way around the curve, and he saw all of the kids. Reid was in the middle of them with his arms stretched up in the air and Aaron saw his fingers moving. Then he disappeared from sight. Aaron near slammed on the breaks and barely had the SUV in park before he pushed the door open. As soon as his feet hit the ground, Reid's head popped up.

"...And he jumped up and realized that he was naked. The mice had eaten off all of his clothes because they were hungry."

Aaron had never heard that story before, but the kids were laughing, and that was really all that mattered. Reid turned and looked at Aaron with a wan smile on his face.

"I think there are some people who are looking forward to seeing you over there."

All of the kids looked over, and several broke out into smiles and flocked to the cars behind Aaron's SUV. Reid nodded his head toward a direction that there were no kids and Aaron started to walk that way. When he came to a small rise, Reid started up it, near jogging to catch up to Aaron.

"I spent the trip here listening to Frank telling Jane what he was going to do. How he was never going to kill as long as he had her. I talked to them when we parked. I convinced Frank that Jane would leave him and it was better to give himself over. That he wasn't going to be able to change
enough to keep her, he was going to slip. Jane promised that she never would. I didn't expect him to go over to her and kiss her before shoving her backwards off of here. I drew my gun and told him to stop. He didn't. I shot him once in the shoulder but he got up again, and I couldn't risk him getting to a kid to hurt me. He had never harmed children before, but he was crazy after killing Jane."

Aaron looked down at the body of Frank with a gunshot to his right shoulder and one straight through his heart. Aaron walked to the edge and looked down at where he saw Jane's body. Her neck was bent at a wrong angle. Her neck had broke when she had fallen.

"It's the best outcome that he would have had."

"He wanted me to go to the kids, and he and Jane were going to slip away. I would assume that if we look around the area, we will find their getaway vehicle." Reid looked around as if he could see it in the dark.

"How did you know before he had revealed that he had taken kids?"

"He was watching the time, and well if it was something that could have happened before we found the truck with Katherine Hale's cell phone in it, the bus was the only thing that made sense. It would be when the parents realized that the kids had not come home. It's the only thing that made sense. He kept checking the time. He's always had this as what he as going to do. George taking Jane home with her wasn't in the plan, so he had to improvise on that."

"You know that I have to take your gun right?"

"I left it with Morgan before I followed you out here. He's already bagged it as evidence. Morgan is at least not looking at me like I am the scum of the earth anymore. I'll stay here with CSU."

"That's fine. I'll leave Prentiss. Morgan and I will head into town to update everyone there and see about getting the kids paired up with their parents." Aaron didn't want to leave Reid alone in the desert, but this was Nevada. Nevada was Reid's home area. "I'll leave the SUV you came out in for you."

"Okay." Reid was looking up at the stars, and he didn't turn around to look at Aaron as he took his leave. This was a giant clusterfuck, and Aaron knew it. The best outcome would have been saving Jane and killing Frank, the second best would have been saving Jane and catching Frank, but Aaron wasn't sure that Frank would have ever come in quietly. Instead, he would have done what he did which was suicide by cop, with Reid pulling the trigger.

Aaron watched as a different bus pulled up, and the kids with the few parents that had parents on the force loaded up onto it. Aaron realized that one of the officers was driving it. Aaron wasn't shocked. The whole town was going to be feeling this for a while. Aaron was going to suggest that someone come to talk to all of them. The Bureau had many options when it came to supporting LEOs after something like this. Rossi had been the one to put that into effect.

The chime of Aaron's phone told him that a text had eked through. He pulled his phone free and looked at it. It was JJ with an update on the agent that had come out with them the day before and had left just as quick after finding out the true scope of it all. Agent Kerr Arthur had not been the best option, but on paper, he had been a reliable agent, and the BAU was a dream of his. Arthur had proven that not everyone understood what precisely the BAU was. Arthur was back in Quantico, and Strauss was processing him for his exit from the team in the morning. JJ also left word that the Jet was going to be ready for taking off at ten a.m. which gave them enough time for a lie in and a good breakfast before they had to leave to meet the jet. Aaron was looking forward to a restful night of sleep.
The second text from JJ let Aaron know that she had been in contact with the Nanny and that she knew to go ahead and drop Jack off at the daycare and that Aaron would get Jack in the evening. Aaron sent a text back thanking her and told her to get some sleep. JJ said that she and Garcia were headed home at the moment.

"CSU team is on its way," Silo said as he stepped up to Aaron. "How many do you want to stay behind?"

"Reid and Prentiss of my team are staying. If you want an officer or two to say, please do but don't feel that you need to. You guys have been through the wringer."

"We have a few that took last night's overnight shift that is coming back on. I'll radio to have them head out here. Your team has got even less sleep than mine."

"Reid doesn't need sleep and Prentiss will sleep in the SUV if he wants to stay out and work on things."

"He doesn't need sleep?" Silo looked out at where Reid was still standing at Jane's body, protecting her from he knew not what. "I heard Morgan talking about the God on the team. I assumed that it was someone before or even that agent that left. He's the God?"

"New God but yes. Don't worry, he's pretty cool."

"I'm kind of glad that I didn't know that beforehand. Or my officers. We probably would have put a lot of pressure on him to find George."

"He was the main reason that we found her."

"Do you mind me asking what he is a God of?"

"Psychology." Aaron watched as Morgan got into the SUV in the passenger seat, allowing Aaron to take the driver's seat. Aaron was thankful for that. He needed to keep himself thinking of something besides what had happened.

The drive back to the station was a lesson in patience. Aaron wanted a bed because while he had slept the night before he hadn't slept well because Reid wasn't in the room. Aaron had got used to hearing him watching TV or reading, or sometimes just laying in bed and thinking. There wasn't a lot of cases that kept Reid out during the night, but some did.

"How is Reid doing?" Morgan asked as Aaron parked the SUV in the spot that the LEOs has ceded to them for the time that they were there.

"I don't know yet. Why do you want to know?"

"Look, Hotch I know that I've been hard on him, but I'm starting to see why Gideon wanted him on the team. I can see why his particular brand of God is needed on the team. For now, just don't push me on personal but I'll do better at treating him like anyone else on the team."

"Good. He is trying his best."

"His best is better than my best on a bad day. He's got a good head for this, and his ability to think three steps ahead of the UnSubs helps in cases like this."

"You know that in the six months before Bale and the six months after, Gideon told me that he had never been able to beat him at chess?" Aaron asked.
"Really? Gideon never had that much failure at chess. I heard him talking to someone on the phone once that since they had left he hadn't had a good person to play against that wanted to play on a regular basis."

"I don't like to play chess too often. Gideon usually got a game every three months out of me."

Aaron shut the SUV and looked at Morgan. He knew that the case with him getting arrested in Chicago and having to delve into Morgan's past. Aaron had been thankful that Reid had been at Morgan's family's house to keep them up to date because having Reid be there for the confrontation between Morgan and Buford had been bad enough with just Aaron there with Gordinski. It's not like it could be kept from the team. Reid had offered nothing to Morgan, and in fact, it seemed that Reid understood Morgan a lot better. When they all got back to DC and Morgan came back after the continuation of his leave for his mother's birthday, Aaron had heard Reid suggest to JJ that a team lunch was a good idea. So the team had gone to a late lunch and consumed way too much pizza than they should have but it had done what Reid had wanted it had shown Morgan that the team wasn't going to treat him different.

Aaron sighed and leaned back into the car seat.

"I've been thinking," Morgan said, and Aaron turned his head to look at the dark-skinned agent. Morgan was looking out the passenger side window at the strip of the street where there were a few people walking. "I was unsure about Gideon coming back to the team, and then he did good on the case, even if he was a little worked up and showing evidence of still having PTSD. Then you were saying that he was good to come back and you had cleared him with the people above with the assessment, but Reid came in and said something else."

"Reid stated that while for that case he was essential, he was worried that UnSubs would be able to get into his head a lot easier. It's not like the Bale fiasco wasn't big news. I have thought more and more about cases while there were a few that I think Gideon would have been a help on, could you see him working on the Fisher King case?"

"He probably would have pissed the UnSub off and who knows what would have happened. Or this one. This guy is smart like you said. He knows human behavior and probably would have got more into Gideon's head than he got into Frank's. Reid's ability to seemingly turn off emotion works well. He sat there with a man who is one of the most prolific killer's we've ever gone after and ate a burger and fries and drank an entire milkshake while making it seem like he was one a date."

"I don't think that Frank turns him on, Morgan."

"No, I know, but he was calm and collected and never once let a single thing slip. I bet that he could have found the kids on his own without pandering to Frank, but he did because it made it easier. Gideon would have not caved like that."

"Reid knows his psychology well, it's why he was chosen as the God of it."

"He's been a good addition to the team, Hotch. I'm glad that you didn't let me talk you into getting rid of him after Gideon was booted."

"He offered to leave to make my life easier," Aaron admitted.

"He loves this."

"Yes, he does, but he knew how much work him being on the team was adding as far as stress went."
"Great. Now I think that maybe I need to tell him I'm sorry."

"He will just brush it off like he did your anger at him for being on the team. Just be nicer and maybe get him a coffee on occasion. He really likes his coffee."

"Did you see him after Garcia got him that Americano?" Morgan had a smile on his face, and Aaron knew that things were still going to be rocky between the two. Morgan's personal issue with Reid wasn't gone, but maybe he wouldn't have Morgan butting his head against a mountain despite himself.

"No. I was in a budget meeting until after he had already left the office."

"His leg wouldn't stop bouncing. I swear that he was going to Speedy Gonzales around the place. Prentiss kept on throwing wadded up bits of paper at him, and he was across from me."

"I wonder if he would rather have an office," Aaron mused. He had thought about it before but never broached it with the young God. Before Aaron hadn't because they were going to get a senior agent and it was kind of a given that he or she would have an office.

"No. He likes his moments of watching us. I got used to it, and it creeped Arthur out. Reid stopped looking at him after about ten minutes when he realized that it really creeped Arthur out. Sometimes he goes into JJ's office and sits in the corner on the floor and writes on case files when he wants silence. I don't know how JJ on the phone doesn't bother him, but it doesn't."

"We better head inside and get things done and head and try and get some sleep."

"Will Prentiss get any?"

"If she gets tired, Reid will send her to sleep in the SUV. There are two LEOs on their way to them to help the CSU team."

"So does he really never sleep?"

"Not that I have seen and I don't see him lying about a thing like that. I don't know what causes it, and he's said that he doesn't, but I don't know if he knows and doesn't want to have to share or he really doesn't know." Aaron opened up his door, and Morgan followed. They had a lot to do before they could sleep.

XxXxXxX

Aaron sighed as he opened his eyes. He could tell that Reid wasn't in the room. There wasn't the scent of his cigarettes that always lingered after cases. No matter what, Reid's clothes always smelled like those cigarettes. Prentiss complained, jokingly, that it made her want to take up smoking again.

Reaching out and grabbing his phone, Aaron rubbed his other hand over his face. It wasn't daylight yet outside, and Aaron hoped that meant that Reid was at the station.

The text on his phone from Prentiss told Aaron that what he wanted hadn't happened. There was a message at four from Prentiss saying that CSU was taking a break on actual evidence collection from where the kids were until it was daylight but that Reid had stayed on site and nothing that Prentiss had said got the God out of the desert.

Aaron sat up and started to get dressed because what was left to be done could be done by the Golconda police. Aaron packed up everything of his and everything of Reid's as well. Aaron didn't hesitate to slip Reid's cigarette case from the bathroom into the pocket that he had seen Reid slip
them. The suit went into the dirty garment bag, and Aaron hung it up before grabbing the one with the clean suits in it. Reid carried four suits with him and an empty garment bag for the dirty ones. Aaron had never seen someone more fastidious than him on clothes. Aaron looked at the suits but frowned at them. He instead moved to Reid's go bag and found that Reid did have casual clothes in it. Aaron saw that there was a pair of black jeans in the bag as well as a thin, nice long sleeved shirt. Aaron grabbed those two things as well as a pair of underwear and a pair of socks. Aaron looked down at the pairs that were rolled together. If it weren't for the fact that every pair was not matched, he would have thought that Reid threw them all together. Aaron wondered at the usually a little OCD God wearing two different colors of socks every single day. Aaron found a set of purple ones that slightly matched the shirt and stacked them on top of the other clothes.

When everything of theirs was packed into their respective bags, Aaron stacked Reid's clean clothes on top of his bag and slipped that over one shoulder. Aaron's bag went over the other, and their garment bags were draped over his right arm. Aaron left his keys at the desk and told the woman staffing the desk that someone would be down to take care of checking them all out when she got up. Aaron also texted JJ that he was going to get Reid and to text him where everyone was eating breakfast.

The drive out to the location where Reid was in the dark took Aaron back a little. He thought about the few months since Christmas and how much Jack was changing. Jack didn't seem to miss Haley at all. There was no ask for Mommy, but when Reid wasn't around for a few days, Aaron heard about Jack wanting Pen. Ri was a Godsend to Aaron. He had even left Jack alone long enough one night to run to the corner store to get milk for dinner. Ri worked the house phone well, and she had proven very capable of getting Jack to be quiet when it was needed. Aaron had been a horrid mess the entire time that he had been gone, but it was snowing and very cold and bundling up Jack long enough to take the five minutes it took to get to and from the store hadn't made sense. Aaron found that Jack was able to keep himself entertained with Ri around.

One night when Aaron had been on the phone with Strauss at Jack's bedtime, Ri had read to him to put him to sleep. The Nanny, Sheila, was great for Aaron's late nights. Sheila was a twenty-five-year-old girl who Reid knew from a friend who was going through school and working as a Nanny. Aaron didn't need her to do dishes and that kind of thing as Aaron preferred to keep his own house clean, but she tailored her classes around her working schedule and knowing that she wasn't needed between eight and five made her able to fit a lot of classes in that time. Anderson had been a godsend in getting Jack from the gate to the daycare inside of the Academy and then back out again whenever Sheila got to the Academy to pick him up after the last class.

Aaron was pretty sure that she was a girlfriend or friend of one of the boys that was living in the bottom apartment of Reid's building. Aaron would worry except that Reid made a lot of friends when he walked at night. Reid still stayed over at work at least a few nights a week, but he didn't stay over the entire week like he used to.

There were no lights active, and Aaron passed by the two LEOs as he pulled up to where he had parked the night before. There were tarps everywhere, covering the areas where CSU still needed to go over but removing the bodies had made it so that the critters in the area didn't come a looking for food.

"Where is Reid?" Aaron called out as the youngest officer came up to him as he got out of the SUV.

"He said he was going on a walkabout. We tried to get him to take the radio, but he said that he was a desert creature and he knew when to hide. My partner giggled like a child when he said that and told me that I wasn't cool enough to get it."
"Don't worry, I don't get it either. So which direction did he go?"

The officer pointed, and Aaron looked.

"Was the escape vehicle found?"

"Yes, sir. Jeep about half a mile opposite of where the kids were. Hidden behind a rock outcropping. We almost missed it."

"My team will be shipping out this morning."

"Reid gave us his contact information."

"Good. I'm going to go and find my wayward agent, and we are going to get some food in him."

"Before Agent Prentiss left she gave him a box of food from the SUV. An agent Jareau had made sure that it was packed into the SUV before you guys picked it up according to what Prentiss said."

Aaron nodded and figured that it would be JJ that would make sure that Reid had snacks for his late night romps. Aaron went in the direction that Reid had gone, but when he found just open desert, Aaron stopped. There wasn't anything for Reid to do but walk. Aaron looked to see if he could see anything in the bright moonlight, but there wasn't a single thing. Aaron zipped up the light jacket glad that he had one. It was in the upper thirties in the desert and Aaron should have put on a heavier jacket before leaving the city.

"Have you ever seen a sunrise in a desert?" a voice asked. Aaron looked around but saw nothing. Aaron even looked up, but all there was above him was open skies. "Typical human. At least you looked up."

Aaron looked down to see a coyote. Aaron looked up again and discretely pinched his arm. He felt the pain.

"So you are okay with a God being on your team but the first time an animal talks to you, you freak out? I'll show you where your God went." The coyote took off at a run to a little outcropping that was west of where the officer had told him that Reid had gone. The coyote looked back and stared at him. Aaron wondered if he should have himself put into a willing psychological test when he followed at a sedate pace after the coyote. After rounding that outcropping, Aaron saw that the coyote was waiting for him underneath a very interesting shaped outcropping of a different kind. When Aaron started that direction, instead of running off the coyote slipped into the black maw of the outcropping. A few seconds later, Aaron saw a small bit of red light, and then smoke came out from the outcropping.

"Should have known that a coyote would betray me. Begone with you," Reid said.

Aaron watched the coyote bow before it took off in the opposite direction from where Aaron was coming from. As Aaron neared him, Reid stood up and walked to where Aaron could see all of him.

"I was going to catch a ride back into town."

"I brought a change of clothes and have already packed up all of your things."

"You didn't bring the clothes with you here did you?" Reid looked at his empty hands as he took a long drag of his cigarette. "Of course not, that would mean possibly getting sand on them. They are back at the SUV?"
"Yes. JJ will text with where we are eating breakfast before heading out."

"JJ had the local FBI office stock both SUVs with snack food for me. Shelf stable things obviously. The Ho-ho's were awesome. I shared them with my buddies before I left."

"You buddies, please tell you made friends with the LEOs and not more desert creatures."

Reid gigged, and Aaron had never heard that tone from him before. Aaron raised an eyebrow.

"It's not my fault that Officer Duncan, which makes me laugh, by the way, doesn't know good science fiction when it bites him in the ass."

"Do I want to know?"

"I'll introduce you to Dune later. I was sharing with Officers Duncan and Lewis, yes. I wouldn't share my Ho-hos with another God."

"That was a God?" Aaron looked at where the God had gone.

"Yes, a Native God to the area. I met him when I was younger once when mom came here for a vacation with Dad and me. I got lost in the desert."

Aaron nodded. He could see that. A young Reid getting lost after looking at things in the desert.

"We need to head back."

"You said that JJ was going to text when she had figured out where we are going to eat. You know that Morgan and Prentiss are going to sleep a little longer than that and JJ is going to have to rouse them. We can leave when we get the text from JJ and still the first ones to arrive. I texted her last night and said I wanted pancakes."

"Almost every place has pancakes."

"This is true, but I want real pancakes. There are a few places around here that know how to do perfect pancakes."

"And you forwarded that list to JJ didn't you?"

Aaron laughed as Reid grinned at him.

"Is there a symbol that tells that a God lives in the area?"

"The Gods are everywhere, Hotch. Humans want to see them or not, but we are there. The problem is that we are not all seeing like humans want us to be. We were created by humans with all of the flaws that humans give us."

"We all make mistakes."

"I heard you are looking for a new place."

"The house has too many bad memories now. I don't want that for me, and Jack's going to ask. I don't know if she ever brought anyone home. Before Jack, it would have been easy to bring someone. I changed the mattress on the bed and even threw out all of the sheets and got new ones."

"You want new memories in a new place for you and Jack. I understand. What are you looking for?"
"I don't know. I wouldn't mind an apartment if it were big enough for both Jack and I and room for the Sheila to stay overnight if needed. Jessica's doing good at helping with that on the weekends, but I want room."

"Not a backyard?"

"If Jack gets older and wants a backyard, I can find a house, but no it doesn't have to be a house if there is a park nearby."

"What about a fourth-floor walk-up?" Reid asked as he lit up another cigarette. He offered it over to Aaron once he had it going. Aaron looked at it, and it was tempting, but he shook his head. Reid shrugged and pulled it back to his lips.

"I don't mind walk-ups. I take the steps a lot at work. I wouldn't mind a walk up, and it'll be fine since Jack's out of a carrier. Why do you have a place in mind?"

"I might. I'll have to see if it's still available."

Aaron nodded and looked out to the east. The coyote had asked if he had ever seen a sunrise in a desert. Aaron saw a rock that looked like it wouldn't hurt to sit on. He was in jeans so it would make it easier to clean off any dirt and sand. Reid was just in his suit without the suit jacket. He wondered if that was in the back of the SUV that Prentiss had taken back to the hotel.

"I sometimes miss the desert," Reid said.

Aaron looked at him and saw that he had sat down in the outcropping again. Aaron could only see the tip of his cigarette glow when he took a puff. Aaron looked back out to where he knew the sun was going to rise.

"It's clean out here. Nature does what it does and if one truly understands Mother Nature, they can making a life out here that is so clean that no one can say a thing. I thought about it once, right after mom had died, going and hiding in the desert but I wanted knowledge. I wanted my education."

Aaron almost asked what happened to him after his mother died, but he stopped as the started to rise above the horizon. Aaron had never seen anything so beautiful. He nearly lost the ability to breathe. Aaron stood there and watched as the sun came up over the horizon and he didn't look away until he heard his phone beep. Aaron had never seen anything so beautiful. He nearly lost the ability to breathe. Aaron stood there and watched as the sun came up over the horizon and he didn't look away until he heard his phone beep. Aaron pulled his phone from his pocket and only looked away when he had to. It was JJ, and she had the name of a restaurant that was on Reid's approved list of places for perfect pancakes. Aaron looked at where Reid had been, and he saw that there was still so much darkness around Reid and his eyes were seemingly glowing.

"Ready?" Reid asked, and the darkness fled as he stood up again and came out of the outcropping. He had a baggie in hand that held field stripped butts from his cigarettes. Aaron had never seen him do that before, but then he had always been around him in a place that had a trashcan around or an ashtray. Reid slipped the bag into his pocket and looked up at Aaron after he did. His eyes weren't glowing anymore.

Aaron opened his mouth to tell Reid that he was ready when he heard the howl of a coyote. It was a single one. Aaron looked around but didn't see it. He wondered if it was the God saying goodbye to Reid. Reid snorted and waved for Aaron to go first.

"We need to walk in a single file line to conceal our numbers."

"Now that reference I get, thank you very much." Aaron didn't turn around, but he was tempted. Reid laughed. "And I have much better aim than a stormtrooper."
"I know you do mister SWAT man." Reid drew up even with Aaron and nudged into him a little. "Walk without rhythm, and you won't attract the worm."

"What's that from?"

"Dune again. It takes place on a desert planet, so it's hard not to think about it and Tatooine when I am out here."

"What were you thinking about back there?"

"That there is going to come a time when me being a God isn't going to serve the team, and I am going to have to make a choice between my fellow Gods and the humans that I have come to know."

"Deep thoughts."

"No more deep than you thinking about removing your son from his first home just to maybe save yourself from memories that haunt you."

"I bought that house to make a family in, but if I ever find another person that I want to make a life with, I wouldn't want them to come into that house."

"You asked me at Christmas if you should tell Jack the truth about his mother when he asks about her and I told you to ask me again later. Well, I'm telling you now instead of you asking. It's always best to go with the truth even when it hurts. Don't lie to him. Tell him that his mother didn't want him and that you did. Let him make the decision on what he wants. It's better for him to know the truth and try and seek her out and she rebuffs him than to lie to him, and he finds out the truth and thinks that you were trying to keep him from his mother. Even if he sought her out then and she rebuffed him, he would always think that if he had the chance to get to know her earlier, she wouldn't hate him."

"Using your Godness for that?" Aaron asked, a smile threatening on his face. He looked at Reid and saw that Reid's gaze was centered ahead. Aaron looked there and saw a glint of metal on the ground. Reid sped up and picked it up. It was a knife. "You shouldn't have done that."

"It's for me."

"What is it?"

"A warning that something bad is coming and that I'll have to make a choice. Everything that I am or what I could be."

"I don't understand."

Reid looked at him through the fringe of his hair. "You aren't meant to. You are human." Reid picked up a sheath that Aaron hadn't seen before and hooked it on his belt and slipped the knife into it. Aaron gulped because it was the first time that Reid calling him human ever sounded like an insult but Reid said it such passion in his voice, such emotion that Aaron didn't take it as an insult.

"Whatever you decide, I'll back you up."

"I know, Hotch, you always do. Now I need pancakes."

Reid started walking again, and he didn't wait for Aaron. Aaron had to run to catch up. He wondered what was coming and if the team was ready for it.
Chapter 11

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

*Humans have a problem when they are confronted with someone that is called a God. Their belief in their Christian God as an all-knowing all-caring God and the reality of what we Gods actually are, are at odds. No God is all-knowing. I am limited to what is written as far as knowledge goes. If the word was written down somewhere, by pen, by blood, or even just traced in the air I know it but if the words never make it from the mouth to paper or even from the mind to paper, I don't know it.*

*I can't predict what Humans will do and I can't stop something from happening if I don't know about, despite what Humans believe.*

May 2007

Aaron heard the snarl from Morgan before he saw the dark-skinned agent take off at a run toward Reid. Reid had his back to Morgan and was paying attention to talking to Prentiss. Aaron didn't know what had Morgan so upset but before Aaron could even think about reacting, Morgan had Reid on the ground. Morgan had a hold of Reid's suit jacket right at the end of the lapels, and he was straddling Reid's waist.

"MORGAN! What the hell!" Prentiss near yelled. Aaron looked around and was thankful that there was no one else around. "This is not the time or the place for this."

"What's wrong, Morgan? Did I upset your delicate sensitivity?" Reid asked, and Aaron could finally see his face, and he swore that Reid was asking for it. Aaron tried to grab Morgan's arm when he raised it up to punch Reid, but he lunged forward so hard and so quick that Aaron swore he was moving faster than a human.

Aaron heard a howl, and he looked to see that Reid wasn't under Morgan anymore and there was blood all over the concrete where Reid had been. Reid was standing behind Morgan. He reached down and wrapped an arm around Morgan's throat and tipped his head back. Despite what Aaron was sure was a broken hand, Morgan tried to escape. Prentiss pulled Aaron back as Morgan tried to get the upper hand. Every single move that the agent made, the God countered. Aaron had never seen anyone move smoother than Morgan until he watched Reid outmaneuvering him. Aaron heard running and saw that JJ and Garcia were coming.
"MORGAN!" JJ yelled.

Reid rolled Morgan on his stomach and grabbed the agent's cuffs before executing a perfect move to get them on Morgan's hands. Reid grabbed the back of Morgan's head and turned to where Morgan's head was pressed with his ear down into the concrete.

"You don't want to mess with me, Morgan. So use your words like a civilized human being, or you will find out just what I can do," Reid hissed into Morgan's ear. Reid shoved himself up, making Morgan grunt. Aaron was still frozen. He watched as Garcia tried to help Morgan up but failed, so Prentiss had to take over. The keys to the cuffs were still in Morgan's pockets. Prentiss fished them out and unlocked the cuffs, paying special attention to not hurt the broken hand.

"Why couldn't you have done anything?"

"What do you expect me to do Morgan? I know Psychology not prophesy. I couldn't just magically know where they were."

"Why are Gods even around if they aren't going to do a damned thing to help humans?" Morgan asked.

"What the hell do you think I am doing? Playing golf? I could be working in a hospital. I could be writing books and making a shit ton of money, but no, I am here working my ass off trying to stop as many people from needing the services of a psychologist." Reid stepped up to get into Morgan's face, and Aaron reached out to grab him back, but Reid was like a stone. Aaron tugged as hard as he could, but the God wasn't moving. "Go ahead and ask what you have wanted to ask since I joined the team."

"I prayed every single day to God, and he didn't do anything."

"I don't hang around with the Christian God much and since my school declared me the God of Psychology I've only met a few Gods but Morgan how many Christians are there?" Reid asked.

"I don't know."

"I don't know the exact number, but it's around two billion in the world right now. Do you know how hard it is to hear the few that pray to me? I can hear them, and I help in ways that I can. They don't pray to a single name for me. They pray to psychology. Your God, the one that you used to pray to, he hears two billion people praying to him. I don't know how he deals with that many people, but he does, it doesn't make him any more powerful than me though. You picked yourself up, and you made yourself what you are today."

"What do you know?" Morgan asked.

Aaron took it as an insult expect Reid's body relaxed under Aaron's hand and Reid stepped back.

"I was a child when that was happening to you. I don't know who you prayed to."

"Before I got away, I prayed to every God. It was before it was well known that New Gods were popping up and when the Old Gods were being found out as real and walking among us."

"And what happened?"

Aaron realized now what Morgan and Reid were talking about. Carl Buford and what Morgan had gone through as a teenager.
"I stopped letting him do it to me. I stopped being alone with him."

"What did you expect a God to do come in and smite him? Hit him with lightning so that he died?"

"I don't know. But why didn't one come and stop him?"

"It was years later, but one did, didn't he?" Reid asked.

"But he killed kids." Morgan looked ready to attack again, but he didn't, not yet.

"Yeah he did, but you don't know what would have happened if he had been stopped years before. What would their life have been like? It could have been a lot worse. You can't know and thinking about what might have been will drive you crazy and to do things that you wouldn't do." Reid reached out, but he didn't cup the side of Morgan's face, but he did pull Morgan close. Morgan laid his head on Reid's shoulder. Aaron could hear Reid whisper something to Morgan, but he didn't try and hear it.

"Morgan," Garcia whispered when her favorite agent finally pulled back from Reid. Reid passed Morgan off to Garcia.

"So Morgan, you have two choices," Aaron said. Morgan looked up at him. "Thankfully, Reid stopped you from actually hitting him, but you still need that hand looked at. You can go to the hospital and claim that you fell getting off the jet or go to the hospital and try and think of a better lie."

"I think that I'll say I fell coming off the Jet. You gonna go with me Baby Girl?" Morgan asked.

"Like you could stop me." Garcia had tears in her eyes, but she smiled at Morgan.

"Why don't we head inside?" Aaron asked of Prentiss, JJ, and Reid. All three of the agents nodded. It was late and the most they were going to get done was a summary of the case, but Aaron wanted some time before he headed home to Sheila and Jack. Reid wrapped his arm around Prentiss and pulled her close, starting to talk to her in Russian. Aaron had smiled the first time that Reid had done it on the case. There wasn't a language yet that Aaron had found that Reid didn't know. Including talking Klingon to a kid during a case.

Aaron held out his arm for JJ, letting her tuck herself into his body. They all four walked mostly silently until they were in the elevator.

"So, JJ how was your weekend? You never actually answered my question."

"What?" JJ asked, and Aaron saw a small blush starting on her cheeks.

"Dodging a question makes someone like me just want to know why one is dodging it. So did you meet up with a certain southern gentleman?"

"How did you...know?" JJ asked.

"You had a pair of men's boxers in your go bag. I saw them and wondered who you had seen and then Monday you came in like you had taken a red-eye flight and you smell of the same cologne that Detective LaMontagne smelled of. Not hard to put three and three together and get six."

"Reid," Aaron cautioned. It was a little too close to the profiling each other.

"No, he's right. I knew that putting him off would make him want to know more. Yes, I have seen
Will twice since the case. The first time he came up here to me, and this past weekend I went to him. I did have a wonderful time, and I look forward to when we can get together again."

Reid turned to grin at Aaron as the doors opened. Reid started off as he was at the front of the elevator but stopped. Aaron nearly ran into him and saw that there was someone in his office. There was no member of the BAU that would actually enter his office like that, not that wasn't on Aaron's team. Aaron squeezed Reid's shoulder as he passed him by. When the person stood up from the chair he had been sitting in, and the light stopped hiding his face, Aaron gasped.

David Rossi was standing in the doorway and grinning.

"So I went by the house and saw that a new family was living there. I was very shocked. Then I come here, and you are on a case. I would think that you were ducking me if I didn't know the work already." Dave was grinning as he said it.

"Dave, you've not returned my last three calls, all of which were to give you my new address," Aaron said as he started toward where Dave was.

"Interesting looking team." Dave looked out at the team that had stopped just inside the glass doors. Aaron looked back at them and waved them closer.

"Come meet them." Aaron pulled Dave along with him with a hand on his shoulder. "Team this is-"

"Mister Rossi, Sir. It's an honor." Reid waved at Dave with a huge grin on his face. Aaron chuckled to himself because Dave wasn't sure what to do with a gushing man who didn't want a handshake. "I would love to sometime pick your brain about several cases."

"Dave this is Doctor Spencer Reid, our resident psychologist. And Jennifer Jareau our Media liaison. And finally Emily Prentiss. The other two members of the team Derek Morgan and technical analyst, Penelope Garcia are not here right now."

"Nice to meet you all."

"David Rossi?" Prentiss asked.

"Yes, the one and only."

"Actually, currently alive there are seven other David Rossi's alive. One of which is in the Virginia area."

Dave's head reared back, and he looked at Reid with a strange look on his face. It was like he was seeing Reid for the first time. "Ain't he young to be a psychologist? And I thought you still had Gideon's pet God on the team."

Aaron looked at Dave in shock before he turned to look at the look on Reid's face. Reid's face was impassive. The happiness of before was gone, and Aaron knew that face from when he talked to UnSub's, the last memorable time was when he was chatting with Frank.

"Dave-" Aaron started, but Prentiss stepped up and glared at Dave before wrapping her arm around Reid's shoulder and directing him away. JJ followed behind with a very scary glare at Dave.

"What did I say?"

"You'll find that while the team has had a hard time adjusting to the God on the team, they are very protective of him."
"So it's Morgan?"

"No, Dave. We have the God of Psychology on the team. You figure out who the God is."

"Jason mentioned the God in passing, never really gave a name that I remember but I was expecting someone...older. That young this is really the New God of Psychology?"

"Yes, Dave he is. Don't worry he doesn't hold grudges long. Morgan's been at his throat for well almost four years, and today Reid decided not to beat the shit out of him when Morgan took a swing. That's why Morgan isn't here. Garcia is taking him to get his hand set after I'm pretty sure that he broke it hitting the pavement instead of Reid's face." Aaron didn't know if he should follow Reid to wherever Prentiss snuck him to. Aaron knew that Reid wouldn't paint Aaron with the same brush as Dave, not after everything.

"This could have gone better."

"What do you mean?"

"I tried to talk to you, but then I found out you were on a case. I had hoped that meeting the team wouldn't be bad, but I didn't' expect this."

"Spit it out, Dave."

"I'm the new member of the team. I came out of retirement to take the spot that everyone doesn't want to take."

"Why?"

"I'm bored. I can't just sit at home anymore and write."

"Reid likes coffee. Hell, Reid likes anything. You are an acquired taste which I thought was funny coming from Gideon and Ryan. All three of you are very different acquired tastes. I found it funny that Gideon was telling me that like he wasn't himself."

"Neither one of us is as bad as Max. I heard you had a case with him."

"Yes. He was not impressed by Reid at all."

"Erin told me that Reid was the reason that Jason was pulled from the team."

"No, Gideon is the reason. He wasn't ready to come back, and I was too much still his friend to see it. I thought that he would get better getting back on the team."

"That had to be a hard choice for Reid."

"No, not really. He still wasn't close to any of us really, and he made the best choice that he had. He didn't care if no one backed him. He made the choice that he knew was the best for the team and for Gideon."

"Jason's got in contact with a friend he had from before. Sarah, I think her name is, and he's pretty happy, even if he's only guest lecturing at colleges in the area."

"That's good. I call once a month, but he never picks up. I just ask him how he's doing in the message that I leave, but he doesn't call back. I figure that until the number is changed, he's allowing me to call and likes it."
"He's not quite got to the forgiving part. Give him time. He'll come out of his shell. So which part did the kid not like? The calling him too young or Gideon's pet?"

"Knowing Reid, the pet part. He'll come around just don't be a big ass to him. He also smokes, rolls his own with some weird but legal herbs and things in them. He buys expensive filters for them. I'll show you the store where he gets them from. He also gets beer from there. I think that a few pounds of coffee for here and some beer and a pack of filters will be just the thing to tell him you are sorry for being an ass when all he wanted was to talk to you. He's never called anyone Mister before, besides victims or witnesses. If he had known that you were an active agent again, he would have called you Agent."

"Yeah, yeah make me feel like shit even more. So my official first day is tomorrow. I wanted to let you know before I showed up in a packed bullpen."

"We can go to my new place, and on the way, we can stop and get the things for Reid."

"I'd like to see him and tell him that I am sorry before we leave."

"JJ and Prentiss aren't going to let you near him. Don't worry." Aaron grinned at Dave as he pulled his phone from his pocket and set off a text to the team to just take care of paperwork the next day. Aaron also texted JJ to have her warn Morgan and Garcia that the newest team member would be joining them the next day. Aaron didn't want to tell them over a text. None of the team had ever worked with Dave.

Pulling into the spot in the side parking lot that was for the residents of the building, Aaron was happy to see that Reid was home. Dave pulled in behind him and took the resident guest parking.

"This is not a place that I would ever think you would stay."

"I got a good rate on the apartment, and the other residents are all pretty awesome."

"Hotch-man!" Jin said as he came out the side door to light up a cigarette.

"Hello, Jin. Jin this is an old friend of mine-"

"David Rossi, I recognize his picture from his book. Little One let me borrow his." Jin wandered down to the opening of the parking lot and looked out. That had to mean that one of the college boys was cooking.

"He's an odd man," Dave said.

"But his food is to die for. Hungry?" Aaron pulled Dave with him into the door that Jin had come out of. Aaron saw Petal sitting and shaping what looked like Wontons in the back with headphones in her ears. She didn't look up.

"Are we in a house?"

"The back half is where they live the front is the restaurant. You like Lo Mein right? Pork?"

"Yes."

"Jimmy," Aaron called out, and the college boy turned to look at him. "That meal you made me last week, just as spicy, Pork Lo Mein for my friend here, that rice noodle thing that Sheila likes and whatever you think he'll eat tonight."
"He's already put in your order, his, Sheila's, and he guessed right on Mister Rossi's. I have them almost done." Jimmy raised up a bag.

"Then I'll wait. If you want to head up the steps, I'm on the fourth floor. Sheila will let you in if you knock."

"And who is Sheila?"

"My nanny."

"Damn. Here I thought you had finally moved on."

"There's not much finally when it hasn't been a year yet, Dave. Just go up and don't hit on Sheila. She's young enough to be your daughter, and if you scare her off, you are paying for the next one."

Dave wandered off muttering about upstart young ones, but Aaron ignored him to watch Jimmy. Aaron liked the whole pay at the end of the week thing that Jin had for residents. Still, Aaron liked to tip the boys. He pulled out a ten because it was all the cash that he had on him. He had used a lot of it on the case buying food. Jimmy came over with a very heavy bag that when Aaron took possession of made a clinking sound.

"Little One ordered beers for everyone but the baby. I made a meal that I used to make for my kids," Jin said as he came into the room again. Aaron smiled. Jin had taken to Jack well and once even had Jack down and was feeding him while Sheila had been eating dinner while working on homework.

"So," Dave said as Aaron stepped onto the fourth-floor landing. "This Little One is who and how did they know that I like Pork Lo Mein if you couldn't remember it enough just to order it?"

"Why didn't you go in?"

"I hear a man talking in there, and I wanted to be sure that I wasn't going to intrude on Sheila and her boyfriend."

"It's not Sheila's boyfriend." Aaron opened the door, and it nearly crashed into Sheila who had a backpack over her shoulder.

"Oh, Hotch, welcome home. Jack's awake but he had a very long nap at daycare today, and he's wearing out. Pen's in there reading to him a little to calm him down before his snack. He said that Jin was making him something special."

"Here," Aaron said as he grabbed the top container of food but found that it was in a bag all of its own on top of the rest. There was even a beer inside of it. "Dinner and a beer."

"Thanks! Bye!" Sheila was gone, and Aaron entered his apartment with the three containers of food. He heard Dave shut the door and then Jack was running into him.

"Dada!" Jack said.

Aaron set the food on the floor as he crouched down to pick up his son. "Dave, I'd love for you to meet my son Jack."

"Pen!" Jack yelled, his loud and high pitched voice making Aaron's head hurt a little because the boy did it right by his ear.

Dave was smiling until he saw Reid coming out of the kitchen with a glass of what looked like juice
in his hand. Dave looked at the bag in his hand before offering it over to Reid.

"I'm sorry for earlier. You'll find that I am an irascible bastard at the best of time. My bark is much worse than my bite."

"Thank you. Sheila has a test early tomorrow. I told her to go home, and I'd watch Jack until you and Rossi got back. I didn't expect you to come so soon. Or to come bearing gifts," Reid walked over to the chair that he had all but forced Aaron to buy. It was a nice chair, and Reid could sit in it for hours and read. Aaron remembered when Jack had been sick a few weeks back, the boy had lived in the chair missing Reid when Reid had gone back to Vegas to visit his family. Aaron had not asked if that was a God family or a biological family. "Oh, my favorite beer. Thanks. I was running low because Hotch likes to drink it. And the good coffee, again Hotch. Now the filters I can't blame on him. He only takes a few hits off of mine when he's horribly stressed. Thank you, again Rossi. I'll try not to be an asshole back to you tomorrow when you show up for work."

"And how did you figure that out?"

"Hotch texted about meeting our new member and you hanging around that late at night, you wanted to not shock Hotch and just show up. Humans, even ones how to study behavior still get stuck repeating things like that. Did I guess right on Pork Lo Mein?" Reid looked like the kid who really wanted to be right, and it made Aaron think of Reid's first day on the team. Aaron hadn't been able to get the image of a foal learning to walk out of his head for weeks. Aaron sat down on the couch with Jack and waited for Dave to come over with food. There were already forks and chopsticks laid out on the coffee table as well as coasters for the beer.

"You did guess right. How did you from a conversation that took only minutes and I insulted you in it?"

"Back when I was just a few cases into being on the team Hotch and Gideon were talking about someone who loved Lo Mein and well...I can't think it as Max Ryan, so it had to be you. I heard Hotch make the comment that pork was your favorite but if you couldn't have it, you were going with any other Lo Mein except for vegetable. You like meat in yours, even if it's fish."

"That's a long time for you to remember that," Dave said as he handed Reid a container that was marked with Little One on it. Aaron laughed and saw that his own was marked with Hotch-Man. Aaron wasn't sure if it was something like Batman or Spider-Man or just Jin being Jin.

"Besides being a God, Reid was born with an Eidetic memory and the ability to read twenty thousand words per minute."

"And an IQ of one hundred and eighty-seven before I became a God. After mom's death, they gave me another IQ test, and I was estimated at two hundred and fifty. Don't forget that, Hotch."

Aaron chuckled. He looked at Dave who had grabbed a fork to use to eat. Jack wiggled off of Aaron's lap and moved to sit on the floor in front of the coffee table. Aaron opened up the small bowl that was nestled on the side of the bag with the beers. He saw that it was a rice and vegetable dish of some kind. Aaron set the bowl in front of Jack, and the boy grabbed a bite of broccoli before he grabbed the spoon on the table. Aaron handed over a beer to Dave before Jack grabbed the one that Aaron had set out for himself.

"Jack."

"For Pen?" Jack asked.
"Yes, but be careful." Aaron watched as Jack carefully moved across the room with the beer in both hands. Jack waited for Spencer to tip the glass of juice carefully into Jack's mouth. Jack took several gulps of the juice.

"What is that?" Aaron asked.

"Iced tea. Rosehip and hibiscus. No sugar. Jack likes it. I have a half of a gallon of it in your fridge. I brought down a glass of it, and Jack drank nearly all of it. So I brought down what I had left." Reid opened up his beer bottle and took a drink before he set down the glass. Jack wandered back to the coffee table to sit down and start to eat.

"Down?" Dave asked after he cleared his mouth of food. Aaron was glad that at least Dave wasn't being uncouth like he sometimes got. Usually, it was when he was plastered that he talked with his mouth full.

"Yes, I live in the apartment above. That's how Hotch found this one. I told him about it."

"And Jin likes me," Aaron said. He looked at Dave and saw the way that Dave was looking at him. Aaron knew that he was going to get it as soon as Reid left and given the way that Reid was eating, that would be soon. Reid knew when he wasn't wanted, and Dave didn't want him there. Aaron did though if only to keep Dave's three million questions at bay. However, Reid knew that from the look that he was giving Aaron.

"Did you want me to take Jack up with me? I'm sure I can get him to sleep soon, nap or no nap." Reid dropped his empty food container into the sink as he asked the question. The beer bottle went into the recycle bin. The glass of tea was kept with Reid and Aaron realized that it was one of Reid's. Not that it mattered, Aaron had three of Reid's, and Reid had two of Aaron's in his cupboards. Aaron wasn't sure how OCD cabinet Reid lived with that. If it was even that was one thing, but it wasn't.

"No, I'll be fine."

"Good. I'm in late tomorrow, remember. I have to talk to that lawyer about that prostitute killer." Reid's eyes go a little glassy, and Aaron knows that he is thinking back on the kid that had lost his life to the demons inside of his head. Reid hadn't been able to get there in time. Aaron had been the first to arrive on the scene and see him covered in Nathan Harris's blood. "Remember, you can always just come up and drop Jack off if it changes."

Reid was gone before Aaron could say a word. Dave leaned back on the couch.

"Does he always inhale his food?"

"Yes?" Aaron said. There was a lot more to it than that but for now yes answered everything.

"So it wasn't me?"

"No, it was you, but you weren't exactly hiding it that you wanted to talk to me."

"So Reid found you an apartment that is right under him."

"It was open when I needed it, and while I am near ninety-five percent sure that Jin is an old God from Chinese religion, I am unsure on his wife Petal, but given the way that she can rule over him, I'd say she's a God too."

"And that's why you moved in here?"
"Haley doesn't know this is where I live, and while she is in jail right now, I'd feel safer in an apartment where two possibly three Gods live than a house on a street where there isn't a lot of traffic during the day. The fact that it's under Reid himself wasn't a factor."

"He seems comfortable with Jack."

"Jack loves Reid. I think it has to do with how warm he was when Jack was younger and now he's used to him. Reid will talk to him for hours. Jack's vocabulary has expanded by a lot. Jack's pediatrician is very happy with his progress on that front."

"Sounds like you have a good friend in Reid."

"I think I'm the only person in the world that Reid considers a close friend. He has friends that he mentions in passing, but it's never more than that."

"He's been having trouble with life after being declared a God?"

"There is something there with the father, but I am not sure. It's team knowledge that his mother died in a car accident just days before he turned fifteen. He doesn't talk about his father at all. If you flat out ask him a question, he will ignore you, and no amount of pestering gets him, to tell the truth. Even your brand of pushing won't work."

"You know me too well. I'll leave the father issue alone with Reid. So you said it was too soon for you to be finding someone, you are young Aaron, and at Jack's age, you could easily find a lovely woman willing to take care of him."

"How much of the information did you follow in the papers?" Aaron asked.

"Just what was published in the society pages."

"She had been cheating on me for at least months, and I think even before Jack was born. She aborted seven other children that she admitted to. Don't push the issue, please. I don't think that I could handle dating a woman or a man right now."

"Wow. She...she always seems so happy with you."

"She wanted me to go into politics."

"You were never that free with information. I usually would have to pry it from your lips."

"I've learned that being more open with my life makes the team a little freer on information and I am able to help them cope easier."

"That sounds like a load of psychobabble."

"It's worked though. It's touch and go with Morgan, but it works."

"And you are okay with me coming back to the team."

"The learning curve is going to be steep. We aren't the same as it was when you were in the BAU. No lone wolfs. You'll have to be part of a team."

"We didn't have women like Jareau in the Unit either."

"Women like Jareau?" Aaron raised an eyebrow as he finally opened up his food to dive into it. His stomach was growling.
"Media liaisons. I'm sure that Erin is going to love that I'm not going to have to handle the press anymore."

Aaron laughed and nodded. He relaxed back into the couch and looked at Jack. The boy was talking just low enough to where Dave either wasn't paying attention or didn't care. Aaron was sure that Ri was there somewhere. She didn't make herself known to Aaron unless she wanted something from him. Aaron wanted to ask what Dave knew about Gods because it was he and Gideon who pioneered the speaking to them. The FBI had sent the best to talk to the Gods that were popping up, some Old, some New. That didn't mean that the Gods shared the rest with the FBI.

It was going to be nice to not be the oldest on the team again.
Chapter 12

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Gods and Human ideals of morals do not always mix. Just like what a child will do to make someone happy, an adult would not do. Morals. Humans teach their children fables and little lessons to teach them morals. The Old Gods, we long ago forgot our Human morals if we ever were Humans to start. I was not. I wasn't a Human, to begin with. I was born from man's search for knowledge. I learned no morals to forget. Humans don't understand Gods, even those Humans who were sent to understand use because they have trouble remembering that our morals are different.

I've read every word that Humans have put on paper, and still, I can't make myself care like them. Most Humans see in black and white while Gods think about all the lovely shades of gray that there are. Me? I see more gray than I see black and white.

October 2007

It was rare that case affected Aaron much at all. There were the ones that hit home, but those Aaron could handle. Aaron felt a hand settle on his the back of his neck. He wasn't sure who it was until the warmth of it settled on his skin. Reid. Aaron opened his mouth to tell Reid that he was fine but the urge hit again and Aaron dry heaved into the toilet.

Aaron could never understand how a woman could have done that. Could have thought that a child was a competitor for her husband's affections. As soon as she found out, she should have gone to police instead of trying to kill the child.

"Sheila doesn't have any classes tomorrow, and I asked her if she was okay staying at your apartment and watching Jack. She said that she had everything she needed to get some research done. She said something about invading my place if she needed books."

"Cause you have too many," Aaron said.

"No, I have enough books to feed my reading habit. Having too many books is hoarding them just of the sake of having them and not reading them. I've read every single book in my apartment, save the thirty that came just before we went on the case."

"What do you do with the ones that are newer and you won't read again?"

"I have many libraries in poorer areas that I mail them too. If the books are older, I sell them online but don't think that this is going to get out of what I have planned. So there is a new club that opened in the area. I've already talked to the team, and they have agreed to go. You need to...what is the saying let your hair down. Sheila has Jack until you are functional enough to take care of him. There is also the chance that Will might be there."

"Who?" Aaron asked because while the name was familiar, with Aaron's mind rushing around, he couldn't place it.

"Will LaMontagne."

"JJ's boyfriend."
"JJ's friend. She isn't ready to call him a boyfriend or lover or anything other than friend at the moment. So the club is close to our apartments so we can all park at the apartment and with my two guest beds, most of the team can stay over."

"That's two of seven, three if you count you. Where are the other four sleeping?"

"Morgan and Garcia can share. JJ and Will in one bed. Prentiss on my big couch, I don't need sleep remember so I figure that you can take my bed. That only leaves Rossi."

"You think that sticking Morgan and Garcia in a bed is an option?"

"Morgan would never have sex with her. They are firmly in the realm of best friends with no sexual urges at all."

"Really?" Aaron asked as he finally leaned back and looked up at Reid. Reid was leaning against the wall, his hand still on Aaron's neck. "You really don't think that they would ever have sex?"

"No, I don't. Morgan respects her too much to ever degrade her that way. He's too set in his ways of short affairs. He's not dealt enough with what happened to him as a teenager to actually start a relationship that will last. So if we want to make it to the club before the time that it'll be too long of a line, we need to leave soon. Rossi is handling the LEOs and paperwork can be done late tomorrow. This case was fucked up, and we all need to unwind."

"Even you?"

"Humans and their capacity to hurt each other astound me nearly every day."

"Says a God who has other members of his race who ate their children."

"You do know that most of those things are false. Mimir was supposed to have had his head cut off, and Odin carries it around. He's alive and walking around the Earth. Humans create stories for reasons and telephone is a horrible way to transmit stories."

"What?" Aaron asked.

"Haven't you ever played telephone? One person makes up a story and tells it to the person next to them, and so on and so on until it gets back to the original storyteller. Usually, it's so changed that there is not a lot of the original left. Human God myths are the same way."

"Huh," Aaron said because that was too much thought for him right now.

"So if you are going to be the DD, how are we going to get the whole team to and from the club?"

"I never said I was going to be the DD. The club has a shuttle service using an SUV. The driver will drop us all off at the apartment."

"Why can't you be the DD? It's not like you can get drunk."

"Just because alcohol doesn't get me drunk doesn't mean there aren't things that do. Don't worry about me. Let's get out there and then we can all have some fun."

Aaron nodded and pushed himself up. Reid handed him a bottle of warm water, and Aaron used it to rinse out his mouth to at least feel a little like he had spent half an hour puking his guts out. A soft rag was handed over next, already wet. Aaron wiped at his mouth before looking at himself in the mirror. He did look gaunt. It would be a good thing to get out with the team. Reid had never joined
them on their nights out, and Aaron wondered what made this night different. He wasn't going to ask though.

"Pretty Boy!" Morgan said as Aaron and Reid left the bathroom. Reid turned to look around and behind them to find the person that Morgan was calling Pretty Boy. Aaron had heard it a single time just after Morgan had tried to start a physical fight with Reid. Aaron was sure though that Morgan had used it to talk about Reid to others, but it was the first time that he had called the young God that in person. Reid looked back at Morgan with a questioning look on his face. "Yes, you. So I hear from Rossi that you want to take us all to a club."

"Yes. Why are you calling me Pretty Boy? Is Reid not enough?"

Aaron couldn't hold back the laugh at the look of pure incredulousness on Reid's face.

"Everyone has a nickname."

"What's Hotch's?" Reid asked.

Morgan opened his mouth and shut it looking at Aaron. Morgan gulped.

"Hardass," Aaron said because he had heard it before from Morgan when the agent didn't know that Aaron was right there. Aaron hadn't said a thing because as much as Morgan sometimes used it as an explicative, it wasn't meant with any amount of lingering anger. "JJ is Jayje which isn't that much of a change. Prentiss is Princess which she hates but tolerates. I don't know Dave's yet. And Garcia is whatever pretty thing falls from his lips."

"And they say you don't care," Morgan said. He grinned at Aaron before looking back at Reid. "So how are we getting to the club?"

"We are going to drive to work, get out cars and then go to my apartment. Everyone will be staying the night there."

"All right, all right. So I'll saddle up the ladies and make sure that Garcia will be ready."

"Parking is a minor issue so if a few would double up."

"I can fit Garcia, JJ, and Prentiss into my car. After breakfast, we are all headed into work, so it's not like leaving the cars at the Academy will be an issue."

"I'll have Dave ride with me."

"I rode with you today, remember," Reid pointed out.

"And there is room for three in the car. That way Morgan is just taking up a single Guest spot."

The finishing of the case took less than an hour, and the LEOs were more than happy to let the FBI go now that they knew that it wasn't a serial killer after kids. Aaron debated what he wanted to do as far as clothes. He knew that he had a black silk shirt that would look good and a pair of jeans that had shrunk a little and looked painted on when he wore them.

Aaron didn't even realize that when he got into an SUV that it was just Morgan and Reid in it, with Reid driving. Aaron looked behind to see Prentiss driving the other with Dave in the passenger seat and JJ in the back, on her phone.

Just over an hour and a half later, Aaron was stumbling into his apartment. Jack was already asleep,
but he went into to kiss him goodnight. Aaron looked at his son and how peaceful he was sleeping. Sheila was asleep in the guest room so Aaron turned off the monitor so that he could talk to Jack.

"Be sure to turn that back on, Mister Hotch," Ri said as she appeared. "I can't."

"I will. He give you any trouble tonight?"

"No. Peaches and Potluck wore him out playing in the garden. Sheila was making dinner for herself. Jack ate plenty like a growing boy should."

"I'm glad. I don't know what we will be doing as far as sleeping goes but everyone on the team will be staying at Reid's for the night, whenever we get in."

"Okay. I'll make sure to tell Peaches and Potluck, so they don't scare the Humans."

Aaron gave Jack another kiss before turning the monitor back on and exiting Jack's room. Aaron found the clothes that he wanted easy in his bedroom and dressed with the same efficiency that he always did. He exited his apartment to see Morgan and Garcia on the landing. Morgan's eyebrow was raised.

"You said you were going to change; I assumed you were going to use the restaurant downstairs. Who lives there?"

Aaron forgot that he hadn't told the team about where his new place was. Garcia gasped and pointed, Morgan, leaned around to look and saw what Aaron knew was visible in the living room. A portrait of Aaron asleep on the couch with baby Jack on his chest. Aaron was sure that Reid had sketched it from memory.

"At least with a God near, you won't have issues with petty theft." Garcia was smiling as she said the words.

"Reid leaves his door unlocked half of the time."

"Cause he can't find his keys? Yeah, I heard him talking to JJ about it." Morgan smiled and wave Aaron out. Aaron turned and pulled the door shut and locked it. "So I heard Reid talking to Anderson about the club he took you to in New York. Is this a place like that?"

"I have no clue. He's taken me to a lot of weird places, so I wouldn't be shocked." Aaron heard talking below, and when they all three exited the stairs that led to the parking lot, Aaron was shocked to see that JJ and Prentiss had changed as well.

"I do have a good eye. You are welcome to keep the dresses ladies."

"Reid do you know how much these cost?"

"No. I barely pay attention to how much my own clothes cost. Those were left by friends of mine, and since they are 'last season' as they call it, they told me to give them away."

"Those are..." Garcia trailed off and disengaged from Morgan. Dave was looking at Prentiss with a look of not a little lust. Aaron stared at Dave until the man stopped looking at her and looked up at Aaron. Dave raised his hands and looked elsewhere. Prentiss was just woman enough to spark Dave's interest, and Aaron knew it.

"Now, I doubt anyone is going to be carded. However, you will have to wear a bracelet. The bracelet is for your protection more than anything. Take it off, and someone will throw you out,"

Reid said. He looked at Morgan and Dave. "You won't see many without the bracelet but if you do, don't accept anything from them."

"Why?"

"It cause they are Gods, Old or New, it doesn't matter, but anything that a God gives you besides me might make your head spin a lot more. There are not a lot of things that will affect a Human that a God drinks and vice versa, but there are a few. I don't want to have to take you home to puke up whatever you drank. The God wouldn't do it out of maliciousness but more a blase attitude about what a Human can handle. As far as clubs go, this is one of the safer ones, everything is filmed, and the bouncers are lesser Gods."

"Lesser Gods?" Aaron asked. He had not heard that term from Reid.

"Gods of Protection. Unlike Gods like me, the more people that worship or think of a God, the more real they become. When it comes to Gods of Protection, they multiply. An Urban area like this can have...fifteen to twenty. I know of one that guards a hospital twenty-four seven. Some of the younger ones like to work in clubs. Think of them like guard dogs instead of police."

"Damn," Morgan said.

"We are going to walk to the club but be driven back. I will not corral seven drunk Humans." Reid said it with a smile, but still, the sting was felt by Aaron. Prentiss stepped up to Reid and linked her arm with his and started to pull him forward. Reid smiled and let himself be led until they hit the end of the alley parking lot. They stopped until the rest of the team caught up.

"Mordor, Gandalf, is it left or right?" Prentiss staged whispered into Reid's ear.

"Left," Reid said, and he laughed. Aaron looked at Garcia because that one he didn't get.

"Lord of the Rings," Garcia whispered to Aaron.

The walk to the club was filled with banter and just a slow wind down from the case. By the time that they hit a different entrance for the club than the rest of the people were lined up at, Aaron could think without the worry that he was going to puke.

Everyone on the team except for Aaron was given a blue band to wear, but Aaron was given purple. Aaron looked down at it, and Reid was talking to the bouncer that was letting them in. Aaron watched as the bouncer leaned forward and whispered something in Reid's ear. Reid nodded.

"The coat room open?"

"Yes," the bouncer said.

"I wasn't aware that this was tonight. I'll talk to them."

Aaron frowned but followed Reid into the club. There was a room that had The Coat Room wrote in bright green letters on it just a few steps inside. Aaron opened the door and ushered the team in.

"What's going on?"

"It's Bacchanal night. I know of another club that we can go to."

"Bacchanal as in the ancient term and revelry that followed?" Rossi asked.

"Yes. Unless something bad happens, no cop is going to show up here unless a bouncer calls them."
Even if there is outright sex on the floor. No one under twenty-five is going to be allowed in tonight either."

"What did you give the bouncer?"

"Oh, that. The number of a lady who wants sex with a God. I told him I'd look for him. So we can stay, or we can go."

"Stay," everyone but Aaron said. Reid looked up at Aaron.

"Compared to the club in New York, how is this going to be?"

"About the same but with more open sex and a lot more people wanting to be watched."

"We can stay. How much is the entrance fee tonight?" Aaron figured that it was going to be a lot higher and while Reid had the money, Aaron didn't want him to foot it alone for a night he was trying to do something good for the team.

"Don't worry about that. I took care of that before we came. Everyone just brought their ID right? Like I said?"

"Yes," seven voices chorused.

"Good. Now, remember unless I give you the drink only take things from the bartender or waitress. Even if someone buys you a drink, a bartender will make sure to give it over to you or send a waitress around to give it to you. They will not allow a Human to drink a God's drink. And please don't worry. Everyone in here knows better than to press after a no is given." Reid grinned at them and opened a door that Aaron hadn't seen behind him. The music washed over them, and Aaron thought that it was too loud for a second and the volume dropped.

"Reid, I think that from now you, when I want to hook up, I'm going with you," Morgan said as he passed by Reid and stepped into the club. Aaron waited and entered last with Reid. The door shut and Aaron watched as it kind of disappeared.

"Magic?"

"Godness," Reid whispered in Aaron's ear.

Aaron watched the team scatter around, but Reid went right for a table. Aaron watched as he sat down and a waitress came over to him. Aaron looked at the bar as Reid talked to the waitress. Morgan was at the bar with a lady already eying him up. Aaron laughed and made his way to where Reid was. Aaron saw that the table was seemingly pulsing with energy as the waitress laid her hand on it. Reid stuck his tongue out at her, and she walked away.

"What's this?" Aaron asked as he sat down.

"Preventative measures. No one can pick up a drink if they don't set it down and no one can add anything to the drinks."

"How is that possible?"

"You call it magic."

Morgan came over and sat down with his drink and Garcia's. Morgan went to set it down, but Reid stuck his hand under it. Morgan frowned.
"Whoever sets it down is the only one that can pick it up."

"Really? Yeah, I'm going with you to find ladies."

The waitress came back with a nice sized mug of beer and handed it to Aaron before she handed a purple drink to Reid. Reid nodded his head.

"So how much is the cover fee for tonight?" Morgan looked around, and Aaron did as well, seeing a lot more bracelets than not.

"A hundred a head for Humans."

"And Gods?" Aaron asked. He was still looking around, there were no other people with a purple band like him. Aaron almost opened his mouth to ask but stopped when he saw the waitress coming back to the table with Dave on her heels. She had a tray of drinks that she set down. Aaron saw that the aura from the table didn't extend to the tray.

"Here you go," the waitress said.

"You are a doll. The bartender told me about the loveliness that is this places magic to protect drinks. If they patented that and sold the rights to do it, I know of a lot of bars that would do it."

"Most Humans are still leery about trusting Gods though, Rossi. They would still be afraid of something else more than the drugged drink."

A shadow fell over the table, and Aaron looked up to see a young man standing there. He did not have a bracelet on his hand, but he did have a tattoo in purple in the place where the bracelet would sit. Aaron watched as the young man smiled at Reid and held out a hand.

"Excuse me," Reid said, and Morgan slid out so that Reid could get out. Reid grabbed his drink and chugged half of it with an eye on the young man. "He said you were here tonight. I'll be back soon, guys."

Aaron watched with a raised eyebrow as Reid walked over to a mass of people with the young man.

"No bracelet, was he a God?" Morgan asked.

Aaron didn't comment because he was pretty sure that the tattoo replaced the band and it meant that he was a young man who lived at the clubs. Aaron vowed to ask him what their bracelet color meant.

Garcia and Prentiss were dancing together in a very bright area of the club while JJ and Will were slow dancing in a corner.

"Don't see anyone you like?" Aaron asked Morgan.

"No, I see several, but I want to watch and observe for a while. Pick the best honey."

Dave slid into the circular booth beside Aaron, making Aaron scoot in a little bit.

"Seeing Reid so buttoned up on cases, it's nice to see him let his hair down. Hell, it's nice to see all of us do it." Dave was smiling and looking around, but Aaron knew the comment was directed at him.

Aaron lost track of Reid in the crowd, but he knew that Reid could take care of himself. Morgan wandered away from the table and into a throng of women after a little while. Aaron liked watching what was happening in the center of the club and not the areas around the edge.
Time lost all meaning as Aaron drank. The tray stayed on the table, and when the waitress brought refills, she set them down there for the others to grab when they made it back. Aaron didn't pay attention to who came and went from the table but kept the conversation up with whoever was there.

After his third beer, Aaron excused himself to go to the bathroom. The signs of a Roswell Grey in the well known holding it pose had Aaron laughing to where he almost pissed his pants. There were pictures of the same alien along the wall in more and more dire faces until a door held a picture of one with relief on his face was on one door, and the one across from it was one in a wig and a dress. Aaron looked back to see the same all along the opposite wall. Aaron laughed to himself as he entered the bathroom. There was strangely no one in the bathroom, but still, Aaron went to a stall and locked the door to take care of business.

Exiting the bathroom, Aaron looked down the hall further and realized there were doors open all along. Aaron wondered what was in there. He looked back down the other way and carefully looked at the walls, there was nothing about No Entry or Authorized Personnel anywhere. Aaron felt a charge of an energy of some kind as he neared the first door. It was empty of people. There was, however, a bed and a sink inside. Aaron frowned and turned to the doorway on the other side of the hall, and it was the same. The third down on the left though had three people inside. Two males and a female. Aaron looked and saw that one of the males was the one that Reid had left with. The woman was still fully dressed while the young man from before was down to just underwear and socks while the other man was fully naked. Aaron watched the man whose back was facing him. His hair was pulled up into a pony tail, and there was a large tattoo on his back. It was a bird of some kind and was vibrant, almost like it was alive. The woman turned around to start kissing the other man and the man who was naked grabbed the hands of the other man, tipping all three of them onto the bed.

"Fuck," the man that Aaron recognized said. Aaron looked down to see that the woman was going down on him. The woman had a bracelet on, telling Aaron that she was Human. Aaron looked at the tattooed man and saw that there was no tattoo on his wrist. Aaron stopped and gulped when the tattooed man turned around, and Aaron realized that it was Reid.

"The nymph who made up that bit of magic is awesome," the other man said. Reid chuckled in response and reached down to grab the woman by the hair and pulled her head off of the other man's cock.

Aaron realized that no one could see him. Aaron had never been a fan of watching others have sex, but he was glued to this. He didn't want to turn away.

"Scoot up the bed, Dev," Reid said as he finally let go of the woman's hair and the other man did as Reid said. "Scarlett, you are the one that flew all the way in for this, so tell me. What do you want?"

The woman, Scarlett, was still on her knees at the end of the bed from where she had been blowing Dev.

"Everything."

"Hmm, so who do you want where?" Reid pulled Scarlett up and turned her around to where he could kiss her. Aaron watched as Reid grabbed her hands and gathered them behind her back. Her wrists were so small that it only took one of Reid's hands to hold them in a loose hold. Dev tossed Reid's handcuffs at him. Reid snatched them out of the air and quickly put them on her. Scarlett
shuddered, and Reid groaned. "I can smell you, Scarlett. Are you ready?"

"I lubed up my hole before you two got in here."

"I'm going to cut that dress off of you," Reid said as Scarlett got onto the bed. She straddled Dev's waist but was still facing Reid. Dev's hands helped to lift up her dress, and for a moment Aaron thought that she had slid down Dev's cock with her pussy, but when she spread her legs, Aaron could see that her pussy was empty. Aaron reached down and squeezed his cock. It had been too long for him since he had sex. Haley hadn't wanted to do it while she was pregnant, too scared of losing Jack even though the doctor wasn't worried.

Reid stepped away from the bed and came back seconds later with a pair of scissors in his hand. Aaron watched Dev rocking his cock in and out of Scarlett's ass only to stop the second that the scissors got close to Scarlett. She whimpered, and Aaron saw her clench her pussy before Reid started to cut the dress. With her hands cuffed, Dev had full control of what her body did in the position that she had tipped back into. Aaron saw that Scarlett had on a lace bra that was bright pink in color. Reid didn't cut it off, but he did make sure that no strip of the dress was left. The scissors were tossed onto a chair when she was mostly naked, and Reid slipped between Scarlett and Dev's spread legs. Aaron watched Reid move, and the movement was one that Aaron knew well, rolling on a condom.

However, Reid didn't thrust inside of her. Instead, he grabbed her by the back of the neck and pulled her up to where he could lick at her nipple without bending down all the way. Dev started to rock inside of her again, slow and sure movements while Reid went to town on her lace clad nipples. He pulled down the bra just enough to get a nipple out, and Aaron heard the gasp from Scarlett as Reid's fingers slipped down to play with her clit.

"Come on," Reid said as his fingers slipped inside of her. Aaron watched his long fingers thrusting in and out of her before she shuddered and nearly screamed as she came apart. Scarlett slumped down, Dev's hands keeping her cuffed hands from digging into him but Reid let her head down to where it was dangling back. Reid shifted closer, and Aaron watched as his cock slid inside of her. Scarlett whimpered in pleasure as Reid pushed his entire cock into her in one go. Aaron could hear Dev's voice uttering things in Scarlett's ear, but he couldn't hear the actual words that were used. Still, whatever it was, Scarlett came again not long after the first one.

Reid grinned down at Dev before he pulled out of Scarlett. Reid dropped down on the bed, and Aaron watched him start to go down on Scarlett. Aaron watched him and realized that the only thing that Reid cared about was Scarlett and Dev's pleasure. Reid's head dropped lower, and Aaron realized that he was doing something to Dev. It wasn't until after a few seconds after and Dev's face as he came for Aaron to see that Reid had been doing something to Dev's balls.

Aaron felt his arousal, but he was afraid of doing anything to make a sound. He didn't want to take his cock out and jerk it there in the hall, and the bathroom was out of the question. He wasn't doing that there either. Aaron looked back up to see that Reid was standing up. The two Humans on the bed looked fucked out, but Dev raised his hand and rolled Scarlett onto her front with Reid's help. Reid mounted her from that position. She was straddling Dev and Aaron could tell that they were kissing. Aaron heard heels on the floor, and he looked to see a waitress headed toward him. Aaron backed up until he slipped into the other room. He hoped that the waitress wouldn't enter there. Aaron turned to look around but didn't see anyone. There was thankfully no one in the room. Aaron could see out and saw the waitress enter the room that Reid and his two lovers were in and he watched her slip in and out after setting down three bottles of something. She left again, and Aaron moved. Aaron realized that he could see out, either Reid had been lying or it only turned to where one couldn't see out of there was more than one person inside.
"Actually, naked," A voice said.

Aaron spun and in the corner he saw a grin. Like the Cheshire Cat, just a grin floating in mid-air.

"Who are you?"

"Don't worry, sweets. I could feel you thinking about my rooms. It only becomes to where the people inside can't see out if there is nakedness involved. That's why the God stripped naked. I can't even see inside when someone is in my rooms. You can call me B."

"Just B?"

"I think that your God is all that you can handle. If you want to watch another round, you'll have to wait a while."

Aaron looked back out and saw that Reid was sitting down in a chair near the bed. Scarlett was on her side with the cuffs undone, and Dev wasn't visible. Reid had a bottle of whatever it was in his hand and a smile on his face. The smile didn't reach his eyes, but Aaron wasn't sure that the other two would know that.

"If you want privacy, I'll leave, and you can take care of your cock."

"No, thank you." Aaron straightened his tie and stepped out of the room. He walked down the hall as quick as he could get away with and found that Morgan and Prentiss were dancing with a small crowd of people. Will and JJ were sitting at the table with Garcia and Dave. Garcia already looked like she had drunk too much. Aaron calmly slipped back into his seat and picked up his beer. He didn't care if it was warm. Aaron took a sip and nearly choked because it was still perfectly cold.

"Yeah, I freaked when my scotch, neat mind you, was still cool," Dave said.

"No one has seen Reid," JJ said.

"I saw him back in the bathroom. Long line." Aaron covered and took a drink, but by the look on Dave's face, it wasn't working. Aaron hoped that Dave didn't drink a lot and had the driver take him back to his place. He didn't want to deal with smug Dave. Aaron looked around for the waitress as he drained his drink. She wasn't anywhere around them. So he decided to brave the bar.

Getting to the bar was easy, ordering was easy, however watching Reid step out of the hallway, fully dressed again and watch him look around without blushing when Reid's eyes caught his was near impossible. Reid slipped up to the bar beside him.

"Getting away from beer?" Reid asked.

"Yes. I plan to take full advantage of the fact that I don't have to watch Jack tonight." Aaron had asked for a double shot of the strongest drink they had and a sweet but good cocktail, and he asked the bartender to keep them coming. Aaron downed the shot as soon as it was set down in front of him. The cocktail was next, and it was a bright blue, like unnaturally bright blue. "That's a Human drink right?"

"Yes, Hotch it is. Why don't you go over and I'll bring yours over when I come over." Reid set down his glass and Aaron hadn't even noticed it in his hand. With the way that Reid was acting, the way that he looked, just as perfect clothes wise had he had before, Aaron almost made himself believe that he hadn't seen Reid in a threesome, but his cock and his libido that was upset at not getting off yet was telling him that he had.
"Thanks," Aaron said as he pushed off the bar. He sat down and realized that Dave wasn't sitting down. Aaron looked around and saw that a lady was walking with him toward an area of the floor where slow dancers had congregated.

Aaron drank more than he ever had and for the first time, he wondered about the people who claimed that they didn't realize how drunk they were because he didn't feel drunk at all. He laughed more, he knew that, and he couldn't stop peeking at Reid when the young God talked. The rest of the team flustered in and out, and the only constant was that Reid sat beside him the entire night. Reid drank drink after drink and Aaron was starting to think that Reid made sure the bartender didn't put alcohol in Aaron's drink. He wanted to call the young God out on it, but he didn't. Instead, he sat there and talked about whatever everyone else was talking about.

When Aaron couldn't keep his eyes open for more than a few seconds, Reid called it all a night and drug Morgan and Prentiss off the dance floor. Morgan pouted, but Aaron saw that he had several slips of paper in his dress shirt pocket. Aaron barely remembered being ushered out into a large SUV and slipping into the farthest back seat with Reid and Prentiss. Dave was in the front seat, and Will, JJ, and Garcia were in the middle. Aaron leaned into Reid, soaking up his warmth as the driver went to where Reid told him to go. He barely remembered the walk up five flights of stairs and being all but dumped onto Reid's bed. Aaron saw that the bedroom door was shut.

"Hotch, I'm going to take your shoes off."

"Okay." Hotch laid there in bed and looked up at the ceiling. Reid didn't have any stars on his bedroom ceiling. In fact, the room was pretty plain, besides the books.

"Hotch," Reid said was felt like seconds later. Aaron looked down at him and saw that his shoes and socks were off. "Do you want to go down to your underwear?"

"I can't sleep in these jeans."

"Okay. Then I'll get you a pair of my loose sleep pants."

"You own sleep pants?" Aaron tried to think about the times that he had seen Reid on cases. Usually, Reid stripped down to an undershirt to run around the hotel.

"I do wear them when I am home alone. I just don't like to run around in them when there are other people around.

"Show me."

"This isn't a contest."

Aaron pouted and laid his head back down on the pillow at his head. He almost fell asleep when he felt Reid's warm hand on his stomach. Aaron wrenched open his eyes to see Reid sitting beside him on the bed. The God was working the buttons on his shirt free.

"You don't want to sleep in this. I promise that you don't want to. Just sit up, and I'll get a shirt on you."

Aaron did as Reid asked and when he was laid down again, Aaron closed his eyes and felt a blanket being pulled over him. He rolled onto his side and heard the click of the light. Aaron laid there and thought about the night. What he had seen. What it made him feel and he was almost asleep when he started to feel cold. Aaron pulled the blanket over his head, and he tried to warm up but he couldn't.

"Hotch?" Reid questioned, and he sounded far away. The bed dipped, and Aaron felt the blanket
come up and he got colder until he felt the warmth. There was something very warm there beside him. Aaron wrapped his arm around Reid's legs and pressed his face into his hip. Aaron didn't care because Reid was warm and wherever their bodies touched, even through clothes, Aaron felt the warmth. It felt great. Aaron closed his eyes and let sleep claim him.
Chapter 13

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

The human mind is scary. It created Gods and creatures. Every single thing that Gods do, it's because humans created us to do it. When confronted with the human mind, it scares them. Humans are always scared when they see what their mind can do.

If a mind can create a God is it any wonder that a human can make themselves forget that they have murdered. Or make themselves think that a comic book character is the one doing the murders. Or even drawing the murders but having no recollection of killing.

For the humans doings those immoral deeds, is there really a form of justice? Sticking them in cages with animals will only make them worse but is there really a mental help that can be given them? There are no black and white answers for some killers.

December 2007

Aaron watched Reid on the rooftop of the apartment building. Aaron wasn't even sure if Reid knew that he was there. It had been two months since Aaron had sought out Reid without Jack as a buffer. Reid hadn't said a single about it.

Before that night, Aaron had never questioned his sexuality. After that night, all Aaron dreamed about was that night. Aaron had woke up the next morning only an hour later than normal, and he didn't feel hungover at all. Other than Reid, the rest of the team had to drag themselves out of bed. Reid had spent the late night and early morning preparing a casserole which while high in everything bad for one, had done well on everyone's stomach. By lunchtime, everyone was ready for work.

When Aaron picked up Jack at the daycare, Jack had been very happy to see him. Dinner had been waiting in the oven for them that night. A spicy paella for Aaron and a macaroni and cheese dish for Jack. The note said it had a full serving of vegetables in it.

Reid didn't press visiting, he came when he was asked to and stayed away when he wasn't, but Aaron felt like he had missed something very important.

"Are we alone?" Aaron asked.

"Yes. Everyone else is gone away to have fun for the night."

"Why didn't you go?"

"Their kind of parties don't interest me." Reid finally turned around and looked at Aaron, a cloud of smoke making a halo around his head. Aaron saw the case with the cigarettes sitting beside him. Aaron walked toward him, grabbing the case and pulling a cigarette free. Aaron reached into his pocket and grabbed the lighter that he hadn't realized he had pocketed at some point during the case until he had found it a little while ago. It was Reid's. "I wondered where that had gone."

"Yeah, I found it when I got home. It was actually the reason I came up here." Aaron lifted up the cigarette up to his lips and lit it. Aaron took a long puff of it. Aaron laid the lighter beside Reid. He moved to the corner of the roof and looked out at the sleeping city. It was two a.m., and Aaron was having trouble sleeping.
"Well, thanks for returning it." Reid finished off his cigarette and dropped it into the ashtray between them. Aaron looked away from him because he wasn't sure what he wanted to say about why he had pulled away. Aaron looked back down at the cigarette case and saw that it and the lighter Aaron had set down were gone, but a single cigarette was there as well as, the lighter that Aaron knew Reid left on the roof in the little shelter was there. Aaron turned around and saw that Reid was gone as well. Aaron quickly finished off his cigarette before dropping the butt into the ashtray. Aaron started down the stairs and looked at Reid's door. He debated between entering without knocking and knocking. Aaron inhaled and grabbed the knob to turn it. He gave it a twist and grunted when he ran into the door when it didn't open. Reid had locked his deadbolt but not the knob. Aaron raised his hand up and knocked on the door. He waited the time that Aaron had waited before when he hadn't started to just enter Reid's apartment before he knocked again. Aaron pressed his ear up to the door and listened. There was no noise inside and the only time that Reid didn't make noise or have a TV or music going was when he was reading. If he was reading, there was going to be no getting him to come out of that book except a text. So Aaron dug his phone out of his pocket and set off a text telling Reid to open his door as they needed to talk.

The response of Reid telling him that he wasn't at home but was at the club shocked the hell out of Aaron. Aaron groaned and started down the steps to his apartment. The range on the baby monitor was massive, Aaron had bought a new one that could reach up to Reid's apartment and by extension the roof as well not long after moving in. Aaron slipped back into his apartment quickly, checking on Jack. The toddler was dead asleep in his bed, his arm wrapped around the stuffed dragon that Reid had got for him just a week before. The dragon was a fast friend, and Aaron was half worried that Jack would start to not think about Ri anymore, and Aaron would end up with a tiny dragon living in his apartment than a pixie who at least helped with everything that she could.

Or Jack could still want Ri and Ri would have a pet dragon.

Aaron brushed at the hair on Jack's forehead as he thought about what he was going to do.

"Hotch?" a voice called out just softly enough for Aaron to hear. Aaron knew that it was Jeremy. What was the young man doing awake at half after two in the morning? Aaron stepped out of Jack's bedroom and saw that Jeremy looked half asleep. "Petal sent me up to see if you needed anything."

Aaron laughed and figured that he was right and she was a God as well.

"I actually do." Aaron thrust the monitor at Jeremy. "I need to find Reid and talk to him."

"Sure. Can I crash on the couch?"

"Sure."

"Good." Jeremy took the monitor and turned it up to its loudest setting and literally fell onto the couch. Aaron swore before he got to the door that Jeremy was asleep. Aaron near ran down the steps. It was cold out, but Aaron wanted to walk. DC at almost three a.m. was a different creature than DC at any other time. Aaron regretted not grabbing his gun, but as he walked around the block, he found that the few drunkards and even hookers that were around didn't even try to talk to him. One of the drunks even crossed the road to get away from him. He must look pissed off or something, Aaron thought to himself.

It wasn't until Aaron hit the edge of the block that the club was on that he realized that he didn't have the fee to get in. There was still a line to the regular entrance, but Aaron saw that no one was at the other. Aaron stepped up, hoping that maybe the bouncer God would let Aaron call Reid or go in and get Reid.
"Hand," the bouncer said.

Aaron held out his hand, and the purple bracelet was wrapped around it. Aaron almost asked what it meant, but then the bouncer was talking.

"Go ahead."

Aaron frowned as the door was opened. Aaron looked at the bouncer before he stepped in, afraid that the door would slam on him. It didn't. Aaron looked back as the door did shut after he was several feet inside. The coat room door was gone from the wall, so Aaron had no clue what to do. There was no sound, just like before but there was a light at the end of the hall, so Aaron walked toward it. As he got closer to the door, the music started to pulse even though he couldn't hear it. He could feel it.

The door was a lurid shade of pink, and it made Aaron's stomach roll a little bit as he touched the knob, it swung open. The club was packed. Aaron could barely see over the throng of people who were all writhing on the dance floor. Aaron stepped inside and the door shut behind him. When he turned to look at it, it was gone. Aaron wondered who the patron God of the club was because whoever it was, they were powerful. No one paid attention to Aaron.

"Coat, Sir?" A voice asked.

Aaron turned to see a man standing there. He was dressed in a pair of jeans and a very tight shirt.

"Um. Sure." Aaron peeled off the jacket he had been wearing, shocked he wasn't cold because he had just thrown on a light one. Aaron shrugged it off and handed it over to the man. The guy touched his bracelet, and a number appeared on it. With the smirk, the man disappeared from sight.

"Aren't you gorgeous," twin female voices stated.

Aaron tried not to jump as the two women touched him. They stepped around to get into his line of sight. It was a set of twins that looked like they were barely out of college.

"I'm sorry I'm meeting someone."

"Pout," the woman on the left said. She turned to her twin and grinned. "Are you sure we can't tempt you?"

"I'm very sure."

"What about us?" A male voice said from behind him. Aaron turned but didn't put his back to the women. No, he put his back to the wall. There were two men standing there, they also were twins. Aaron gulped.

"Back off," a new voice said. Both sets of twins looked up and behind Aaron. Aaron had never felt so trapped or scared in his life. He never should have come. There was no way he was going to find Reid in the crowd. "Go find someone else to toy with."

Aaron waited until the twins were gone from sight, blending into the crowd before he turned around. Aaron saw no one behind him.

"Go to the bar," the voice said, again behind Aaron. There was no fighting with the urge that he had then to go to the bar. Aaron found the crowd splitting just perfectly to allow him to slip through. At the bar, the female bartender for that area was setting down a drink just as Aaron stepped up.
"B said you were going to need this," she said with a wink before she moved down to take another
order. Aaron picked up the drink, not as wary as he should have been. Instead, he took a drink and
found that it did calm him, but it didn't take like any other beer he had ever drunk before. There
wasn't a taste of alcohol at all.

Aaron turned around to watch the crowd. He couldn't see Reid at all and wondered if the young God
was in the back again, fucking his two humans. Aaron remembered what Reid had said before about
his sexual proclivities. It seemed that Reid didn't go for Gods at all, just humans, despite his words
prior. Aaron drank deep of his beer-like drink and looked around. He spotted Dev at a table in the
corner. Aaron thought that maybe asking him where Reid was would be better than hunting for him.

Draining his beer, Aaron set the empty glass back on the counter before making his way over toward
where Dev was. Aaron was about five feet away, and Dev wasn't looking up at him but down at his
phone when Aaron felt eyes on him. He stopped and looked around. There was no one looking at
him. He turned back to Dev, but the feeling didn't go away. Aaron looked around again, but this time
he noticed something that hadn't been there before. There was a catwalk around the top of the
building. There were some people scattered around there, and he quickly spotted Reid staring at him.
There could have easily been another floor added to the building, but instead, there was just the
catwalk.

Aaron followed the catwalk until he spotted the stairs leading up. There was a bouncer there as well.
Aaron didn't pause, and the bouncer let him up with no issue. Aaron went up the steps as quickly as
he could. Reid was still on the far end, and Aaron saw that there was another set of stairs that led off
the catwalk and down into the building somewhere else. Aaron saw Reid staring down at the
dancefloor, but from where he had moved, he couldn't see Dev anymore. Coming around the
catwalk to Reid wasn't unlike stalking prey. Reid never looked up at all and Aaron was sure that he
would shock him.

Just before Aaron got to Reid, a group of three walked past Reid and Aaron looked at them, seeing
they all had the purple band tattoo on their skin. He opened his mouth to ask them what they meant
compared to the other bracelets but stopped when he heard the music change. Aaron looked down to
see that many of the dancers were now writhing like they were having a massive orgy. He watched
for several minutes before jerking his face away to look at Reid, who was staring at him with a smile
on his face.

"Why did you leave?"

"I had a prior appointment, and I didn't want to be late."

"So you just left?"

"I wasn't aware that we were really speaking at this moment in time, Hotch. You have your reasons
for doing what you did over the last two months, and they are yours. I won't disappoint a friend who
came all the way from England to visit me, and since he hates planes, I wasn't going to make him
wait on me when he has to fly back the day after tomorrow."

"And where is this friend?" Aaron asked.

"Down there." Reid pointed, and Aaron saw that there was a small section of the dance floor that
had everyone keeping a wide berth around the kid dancing. Aaron thought at first that it was the way
the kid was dancing, he was all arms and legs, and his body wasn't dancing in any way that was
attractive. But as he watched he saw that every time the kid stopped for a few seconds, his eyes went
right to a pair of men sitting at a table right in front of him. It was those men that were keeping the
others away. Aaron saw the kid stumble on tired legs over to the men, but he didn't collapse into the
booth they were in. No, he sat down on the tabletop and reached for a glass. He pouted when it wouldn't let him pick it up. The two men grinned, and one of them reached for the glass and handed it over to the kid.

"One Old God and two New Gods. James has been a dear friend for a few years. I wasn't aware that he knew Findlay or Alec. Findlay wanted me to meet his two beaus. I was pleasantly shocked."

"Who is who?"

"Alec is a New God of well explosions. I blame James for that. Took Alec under his wing in Her Majesty's Navy and made him love to blow shit up. James is a Death God. Never has admitted which one to me in the past ten years. Findlay is a New God. Hacking. He was seven when that happened. Poor kid aged up to eighteen and stopped. I, at least, stopped after I had turned twenty-one."

"Death, hacking, and explosions. How in the hell did they meet?"

"Her Majesty's Secret Service. I should say MI6. They tried to seduce me into it, but I wanted FBI. Our job is a little more black and white, and we don't fight our battles in the shadows. CIA never interested me, so neither does MI6." Reid turned to look at Aaron again. His eyes darting around Aaron some. Aaron looked around to see that there was no one close to them anymore. No one could hear them. "Don't worry, Hotch. I figured out tonight what happened."

"What do you mean?"

"Yes, I went dancing with Dev but the look that you were giving him tonight tells me that you saw more than that. So what about watching us have sex with Scarlett upset you?"

"I thought I knew my sexuality."

"Ah. So you liked it too much. Well, Dev is unattended tonight, and I'll be leaving with James, Findlay, and Alec in about half an hour. So you can figure out what you are really feeling with him. Have a good night, Hotch."

Before Aaron could even form words, Reid was gone. Aaron turned to lean on the railing of the catwalk. Reid joined Findlay in sitting on the table, grabbing a drink up as he did. Findlay started to laugh, and the matching smile on Reid's face lit up his whole face. A few minutes of talking and then Findlay held out his hand and pulled Reid with him onto the dance floor. There was an ease to the way that they moved together in a weird dance that spoke of the intimacy of friendship and not sex.

A man wandered a little too close to Findlay and James was up in an instant, and even from where Aaron was he could feel the weight of James's Godness on him. The man stumbled back, and Aaron saw the band on his wrist that marked him human. James though didn't go to Findlay, he went to Reid and said something to the human. Reid laid a hand on James's shoulder and pulled him back. The trio went back to the table. James picked up a glass and handed it to Reid who downed it. Findlay finished off his, and Alec handed his over to the kid as well. Reid grabbed his glass and drained it. Aaron watched the foursome move out to the door, and they were gone.

Aaron thought about staying, but it would better to go home and maybe cuddle with Jack. He had got good at picking up the toddler without waking him over the past month. It would be better than standing and staring at a man that he didn't understand what he felt for staring at him.

The walk home in the cold December air did nothing to clear the fuzziness from his head. In fact, he thought about the case. The artist who did graphic novels who was going to be in a psych ward for
the rest of his life. The phone that was his only lifeline to a woman that he loved and lost. It wasn't a good feeling, but the team had done the best that they could for him. It was never enough though.
Chapter 14

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Suicide is a touchy subject, even for Gods. Many Old Gods over the years have chosen to kill themselves than to adapt. It was never an option for me. Knowledge is everywhere, and the more humans crave it, the more that I feel alive.

Humans have a saying that the only constant is death and taxes. Well, knowledge is as well, but a lot of humans don't prize knowledge. I know a God of Death. He's never got bored enough to even think that he didn't have something to live for.

Gods killing themselves sucks but what can another God do? Humans kill themselves because they feel they have nothing left. How can one fault a God for feeling the same?

April 2008

Aaron never understood Angels of Death. Not on a personal level. From the standpoint of his job he did. He could recite it all, but on a personal level, Aaron didn't understand how they could do it.

"You look a little melancholy," Dev said as he slid into the two-person booth that Aaron had claimed for the night. It was the first time that Dev had ever said a thing to Aaron at all.

"Just thinking about work."

"While you are here?" Dev grinned and waved at a waitress. Aaron watched him pull her down by the lapel of the shirt she was wearing and whisper in her ear. She grinned and nodded before going up to the bar. "I ordered us drinks. Don't worry we got the same thing. I know that Spencer warned you about taking drinks from strangers. The waitresses here would never give a tainted drink to anyone."

Aaron didn't answer, but he watched the bartender make the drink. It was too early in the night for the place to be full. Aaron and Dev were the only ones in the whole place with the purple bracelets.

"Here you are sweets," the waitress said as she laid down her tray so that they could grab their drinks.

Dev took a drink of his first and grinned at Aaron. Aaron took a hesitant sip of his. It was fruity but strong as well, and the alcohol burned all the way down. It warmed Aaron up though from the inside. He took a larger drink and nearly slumped into the seat.

"So where is Spencer?"

"Jack wanted him tonight. Reid's been busy with a new degree and hasn't had as much time for him, so Reid declared tonight a him and Jack night."

"Why do you call him Reid, even now? I've heard you call the one co-worker of yours Dave. What's different between you and Spencer and you and Dave?"

Aaron opened his mouth but shut it because he didn't want to go into that. He didn't need to explain why he called anyone what he called them.
"So your job makes you see the worst of humanity. I have never been inclined to get to know many of my kind. Why do you fight to save humans?" Dev looked very interested in the question he asked, but Aaron wasn't that interested in answering him. He didn't mind the drink, he didn't mind the company, but if he had wanted to talk, he would have gone somewhere else, where talking was a big priority and not here where drinking and dancing and sometimes even sex was the point.

"I think that maybe you should go back out onto the dance floor."

"And I think that you and I should go into the back. The rooms are open all the time, not just Bacchanal nights. Come back, and I'll show you what you have been missing." Dev leered at Aaron as he said it.

"Go dance and maybe I will." Aaron didn't want to upset the man, but he really didn't want to go back into the back with him. Dev danced with a new partner every song and between came back to the table for a swig of his drink. The waitress dropped off four more of the drinks for Aaron as he finished each one. Aaron got warmer and warmer as he drank. He was thankful that he had only worn a T-shirt to the club because anything more and he would have needed to strip naked to keep cool enough not to pass out.

"Come on, Aaron," Dev said, and he helped Aaron up and out of the booth. Aaron leaned in to kiss him, but Dev grinned and ducked away. "Let's take this private. I don't fuck on the dance floor."

Aaron felt lighter than air as he followed Dev into the back of the club. Down the long hallway, they went. Aaron tried to turn into the room that Dev, Scarlett, and Reid had fucked in, but Dev stopped him and pulled him down further. Dev showed him into a room that was muted in colors. Aaron grabbed Dev and shoved him into the wall, trying to kiss him. Dev slipped out of Aaron's hold and pushed him back toward the bed. Aaron flopped down onto the bed, and Dev straddled his waist, grabbing his hands and pinning them down.

Dev's face faded in and out of Aaron's vision, almost like Aaron was blinking but he didn't understand why. Aaron closed his eyes and tried to open them but they wouldn't.

Aaron wasn't sure if he was asleep and dreaming or if he heard Reid's voice after a while or not. It was hard to understand because he sounded like he was in a well but that was impossible as they were in a club.

Something was pressed to Aaron's lips, and he parted them to accept whatever it was. It tasted like water, but it didn't at all the same. Aaron drank it deeply, hoping that whatever it was would help how he was feeling.

"Shhh," a voice that sounded like Reid's but didn't. Aaron didn't realize that he was making a noise. Aaron felt like he was floating.

"I thought he was-"

"Shut up, Dev. Just shut the fuck up. You've done enough. Get the fuck out of here, and I don't want to see you for a while." Reid's tone was angry, and Aaron didn't think that he had ever heard him that angry before. Aaron shuddered on the bed and tried to get Reid back to him. He wanted the warmth again. Reid came back closer to him, and Aaron sighed.

"Pen," Dev protested.

"Let's go," a new voice said.

"Just let me-" there was a crunching sound and a very pained outcry.
The warmth at Aaron's side disappeared, and he tried to open his eyes, but all he saw was darkness. He felt something shift on his face and forced his hand up to grab it. It was soft, and Aaron petted at it for a few seconds before he grabbed it and lifted it. Aaron looked around, and when he could focus, he saw that Reid had Dev by his neck and Dev was pressed into the wall. Reid's other hand had a hold of Dev's arm, and even Aaron in his weird state knew that no arm should be at that angle.

"Reid," Aaron called out.

Reid turned his head around to look at Aaron, his face going soft. Aaron realized that he was in Reid's bedroom when Reid dropped Dev down to take a step toward Aaron. Someone else moved, and Aaron saw someone that he had never seen before standing in Reid's bedroom door.

"Put up a fight, and I'll make sure that Smart Boy's broken arm that he gave you feels like your being fucked like the whore you want to be treated as."

Aaron could barely hold his eyes open.

"Don't fight it, Hotch. Just shut your eyes." Reid reached out and grabbed the cloth that had been over Aaron's eyes and laid it over them again. The cloth still felt cool, and Aaron realized that it was damn near frigid. "Shh."

"I'm sorry."

"You have nothing to be sorry for. You both drank the same thing, and you didn't know that it would affect you like this."

"Last time I drank, I drank a lot more than that, and it didn't bother me."

"I know."

Aaron raised his hand that had the bracelet on it, and he tried to open his mouth to ask about it, but he felt so tired that he dropped his hand down. His body had been so hot, but now with that cold cloth on his face, he felt cold. The bed dipped, and Aaron felt Reid slip into the bed with him. Blankets were drawn over Aaron, and the warmth from Reid was there. Aaron didn't even think twice about trying to scoot as close as he could to the young God.

Fingers tangled into Aaron's hair and directed his head around to rest on Reid's thigh. Aaron took that as permission to cuddle as close as possible. Aaron threw an arm over Reid's thighs and soaked up the warmth. Reid's hand didn't leave his hair at all. It scratched at his skull and helped to calm him down enough to where he slipped into sleep again.

Aaron felt like shit as he slowly woke up. His stomach rolled, and he almost felt like he was going to throw up. Instead, though, Aaron forced himself not to. He didn't feel like moving and especially didn't feel like moving fast enough to make it to the bathroom to throw up in there and not all over the floor.

"Shush," Reid said.

"'Kay," Jack whispered back at Reid.

Aaron knew that he wasn't in the same position that he had been in the night before. He could feel that he was pressed into Reid's side still and that the young God was still sitting up.

A page turned in a book, and Reid cleared his throat a little before he started to speak. "'From then
on, Matilda would visit the library only once a week in order to take out new books and return the old ones. Her own small bedroom now became her reading-room, and there she would sit and read most afternoons, often with a mug of hot chocolate beside her. She was not quite tall enough to reach things around the kitchen, but she kept a small box in the outhouse which she brought in and stood on in order to get whatever she wanted. Mostly, it was hot chocolate she made, warming the milk in a saucepan on the stove before mixing it."

Reid's voice was soft, and Aaron wondered what book he was reading. He hadn't read it, he knew that. Reid kept on going, flipping the pages as he did. Aaron thought about the fact that Reid was actually using a book. Did that mean that he hadn't read the book before or did he have it in front of him for Jack? Aaron shifted on the bed trying to fake waking up. The hand that had been in his hair the night before was still there, and Aaron nearly moaned at the feeling of blunt nails on his scalp. Aaron pressed his lips together to keep the sound out, but he pressed his head into Reid's hip.

"Your Dad doesn't want to get up, Jack-Jack." Reid's voice was full of humor.

"Up, Dad, up." Jack whispered loudly.

Aaron grinned into Reid's pants, rubbing his face back and forth some. It was nice to feel happy despite how shitty he felt.

"I have breakfast almost done, once you get up and get into the shower to wash the stink off, I'll finish it up."

"Pancakes," Jack whispered. His voice in awe at the word.

Aaron opened his eyes and rolled back enough to where he could find his son. Jack was sitting on the bed on the other side of Reid. He was already dressed for the day and his still slightly wet hair told Aaron that he had been given a bath. Aaron had assumed that Reid had stayed in bed with him all night, but it seemed that he had got up and had done a lot of things already.

There wasn't a lot of the night before that Aaron remembered but some of trickled back into his brain. He remembered trying to kiss Dev. A blush came up on his face because he knew now in the stark light of day that it wasn't Dev that Aaron wanted to kiss.

"We can read more on Matilda later, Jack. Why don't we let your father get up and awake for the day."

"Kay." The bed jiggled as Jack scrambled off and took off at a run out of the bedroom door.

"How are you feeling?"

"What was that shit?"

"Something that you shouldn't have been given. If you had drank one, you would have been fine. The more you drink, the worse it gets. I have had a long talk with Dev about what he did."

"Did you...break his arm?" Aaron tried to remember if he actually saw that or not.

"No, I dislocated his shoulder and put a hairline fracture in his collarbone at the same time. He didn't realize how bad you were affected and he never should have taken you to that backroom no matter what."

Aaron looked at where the bracelet had been the night before. He thought about those that he had seen with them, and they were almost always with a God of some kind. A claim. The damned
bracelet meant that Reid had claimed him in some fashion. Or he had known that Aaron wouldn't want to get advances that meant anything and had used it to protect Aaron. He could see the young God doing that, and it fit more than Reid staking a claim.

The thought of Reid staking a claim on him sent a shiver down Aaron's spine. Aaron raised an arm and draped it over Reid's legs again, clutching him close. Reid's hand in his hair didn't stop, and that wasn't helping. Nails dig in a little more, Reid probably thought that it would be calming but it was arousing, and Aaron's cock had been too long without someone touching it. Aaron wanted to throw his leg over Reid and give his steadily growing cock something to press into. He could even shift his arm around to where he could finger Reid's cock. It was very arousing the thought of that and Aaron bit his lips to hold in the moan.

Reid's hand left Aaron's head, Aaron threw out his hand to catch it as Reid slipped from the bed. Aaron didn't know what he was doing, but he didn't want Reid to leave. Reid grabbed Aaron's hand with his free hand and pried it off of his hand. Reid laid Aaron's hand on the bed and patted it before he left the room. Aaron laid there and looked at the door hoping that Reid came back but minutes passed and the young God never did.

Ten minutes later, Aaron knew that Reid wasn't coming back, so it was time to shower. Aaron crawled to the edge of the bed and forced himself up. His body ached, and he had never felt like this after a night of too much. He hoped that Reid never told anyone on the team about this, especially Dave.

Half an hour later, Aaron was shambling into the kitchen, feeling mostly like a human being. Jack was laying on a rug in the living room that had cars scattered all over it. Aaron looked at the rug and realized that it was a town. There were roads and buildings, and even parks on it. Aaron had seen one like it in the toy store that last time he had gone to find small toys to give Jack while he was being potty trained. Jack had started to rip off his diapers and run around the house naked, and Aaron knew that it was a sign. Jack was doing well on potty training. There was a small kids toilet in the two different bathrooms in Aaron's apartment and one in the main bathroom at Reid's.

Aaron walked over to where Jack was playing on the rug. It took up most of the free space in Reid's living room area, and Aaron knew that things had been moved to accommodate it.

"My Pen," Jack said before he babbled a little and Aaron knew that Jack was telling him that his Pen had bought it for him.

"Breakfast is ready," Reid called out slightly from the kitchen area.

Aaron reached down and picked up Jack when the boy held out his hands.

"So Jack wants to go to the park today. I told him that it was up to you." Reid set down a plate of pancakes that looked...red. There was a plate with some gently cooked sausage patties and another with bacon on it. The red pancakes though drew Aaron's gaze more than the rest of the food. Even Jack's pancake was red. Jack's pancakes was cool to the touch so Aaron set him down in his booster seat so that he could reach the table. Reid had already cut up Jack's pancake, so the boy grabbed a bite of it and chewed in happiness.

"Why are the pancakes red?"

"When have I told you anything about what I have put into the food until after you have tried it?" Reid asked. He sat down and grabbed a small cup of butter that looked like it had lavender flowers in it. Aaron thought about what was red that would stain enough to make pancakes red and knew that there were several things but one of the main things were rosehips. Aaron reached out and ripped a
small piece of his pancake off and popped it into his mouth. He grabbed his glass of juice to wash the
taste away if it sucked but as he chewed he couldn't place how it all tasted, but it was just sweet
enough that all would be needed was a little butter and no syrup. Aaron scanned the table and
realized that there was none on the table anyway. Aaron watched Reid cut up a piece of sausage and
drop the pieces onto Jack's plate along with a soft piece of bacon. Jack picked up the bacon whole
and before Aaron could stop him raised it up to his mouth. He bit off a piece though and set the
bacon down.

"It's his second piece. I had him help me cook, and he munched on a piece. He's learning things he
had to eat in small bites really well."

"Yeah?" Aaron still hadn't found parenting books in Reid's apartment, but he would find them one
day. Reid had a knack of knowing just how to push and when to pull back when it came to Jack and
his education on well everything that a two and a half-year-old could learn. Aaron wondered if he
would be testing Jack for a genius level IQ and he wondered if a lot of it was Reid. He wondered if
genius could be taught if one started young enough.

"He did good with his first piece, so I told him if he did good at breakfast, we could see about you
not cutting up his food as much at lunch."

"Sure. What were you thinking about for lunch?" Aaron ducked his head down to get some of the
butter to slather on his pancake. He watched as Reid stacked another on top of his, repeating the
buttering of it and until he had five stacked high. Reid didn't answer, and it made Aaron look up.
Reid was staring at him. His eyebrow quirked as he asked the silent question about if they were
really going to do this. "I have no plans for today."

"Neither do I. There is this nice bistro that has good sandwiches and soups in Alexandria that I've not
been to in a while. There is also a really nice park near there. We can hang around the apartments
this morning and then go out for lunch and play in the park after."

"Sounds good."

"I also got that baby gate that Petal mentioned. Two of them."

"Baby gate?" Aaron thought about why one would be needed.

"Oh, it was just Jack and me getting dinner that night. She mentioned that a baby gate at the top of
my landing and the bottom of yours meant that we would allow Jack to move freely between
apartments and not worry about him going up too far or down too far. I guess that's what a family did
once who had kids about the same age. Jack's good at stairs, and he knows not to run."

"Sounds good. That's actually really a good idea. So leave around eleven to head out to lunch?"

"Why don't we make it one?" Reid pointed at the clock on the wall, and Aaron saw that it was just
about nine thirty. He had slept a lot later than he thought given that he had got drunk early as well.

"One sounds good." Aaron would spend the morning doing some things around the apartment and
getting a hold on his traitorous brain before an afternoon with Reid.

Jack started to babble, more understandable words thrown in than anything else as he told a story as
he ate. Reid listened with a sharp ear, and when Jack's words were really close, he corrected him but
left the mostly scrambled words alone. Jack's vocabulary was still growing in leaps and bounds.
Aaron was sure that Jack would be starting to read soon. Aaron wondered briefly what he would
have been doing with his personal life if he had thrown Reid off the team as soon as Gideon had left
and he didn't like that thought.

Aaron pushed his thoughts away from that and onto happier things. Like a quiet day with his son and Reid.
Chapter 15

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Sex is messy.

Messy is the best word ever to describe sex. Because if the act of sex doesn't make a mess of you, you aren't doing it right. There is the literal mess that orgasm makes but also the mess of the emotions of the parties involved.

Any human who tells you that they don't want a relationship isn't lying. The just don't understand that ache inside of themselves. They have equated it to a need for sex instead of the need for just connection. Gods feel that too, but we are primarily solitary creatures. To trust another God that much to allow them in, it hurts when that God leaves so it's better to connect to humans and even other Gods through sex and nothing more.

Still to find oneself in bed with anyone feels lovely. The rush of the seduction. The surge of the orgasm. It's the morning that dawns stark and cold and someone alone in bed. For me, it's usually the other person waking up alone. I've not slept in bed with anyone for longer than it takes to get over the orgasm in two thousand years. It takes New Gods a while to learn it and watching them near break themselves is a guilty pleasure.

November 2008

"So everyone is in sinfully awesome Vegas for the night. Who is going to party?"

"Me and Prentiss have plans to go hit a club and maybe a table or two. We are trying to talk JJ into cutting loose without her man and before she pops her kid out."

Aaron laughed a little at that because JJ was close to popping as Morgan put it. Aaron hadn't been shocked when she had ended up pregnant, he was happy for her and for Will. The shining wedding band on JJ's finger showcased just how much she had jumped into the relationship with Will. JJ had kept her name after the short and private wedding in one of the local parks over the summer after the disastrous case in New York. Kate was never going to be an active field agent again, Aaron had found out just before taking the case in Vegas.

Looking at Reid curled into a chair in the police department and reading over a few case files from a cold case that one of the officers wanted help with, Aaron thought again about how happy he was that he had taken Reid with him that night. Between the two of them and the knowledge in Reid's head from books he had read once in college when a friend had left in Reid's room after a study night, Reid had been able to stabilize Kate Joyner enough to move her and in the process, figure out what the game plan was.

Aaron had been thankfully more worried about Kate to realize what was happening when Reid attacked and knocked out the driver of the lone ambulance that had come to help them before driving them to the next to the closest hospital. The mop up after had taken little time, and Morgan and Dave had taken care of it while Aaron had stayed with Kate.

"What about you Reid?" Garcia asked, her voice loud enough to penetrate Aaron's musings on his friend and watched Reid. Reid was lost in the case file and didn't hear Garcia. Aaron picked up a piece of paper and wadded it up. He tossed it so that it rolled down the case file. Reid laid the file
down and looked up. He looked around at the team before landing on Aaron.

"Yes?"

"Are you going to see your dad since you are here? I don't think you've talked about going home since I've been on the team." Garcia looked at Reid with anticipation on her face.

"I've not seen William Reid since three days after I buried his wife in the ground."

"You didn't...go home on holidays or over the summer?" JJ asked. Aaron could tell that she was upset and that she couldn't understand.

"I went back to Caltech as soon as possible. Given the situation, my father's secretary found an apartment just off of campus, and I lived there until I moved here."

"You-"

"I send her flowers every mother's day because she is a wonderful mother of four children and she tried hard to be what I needed given my absent father."

"It couldn't have been that bad," Morgan said.

"William Reid walked away from his wife and son when that son was ten. Do you want to know why?"

Aaron had heard Reid talk like that before. It was like he was trying to distance himself from it all. Like he was trying to make himself believe that it hadn't happened to him. Aaron's heart ached because he could see the little boy in him now. That scared boy whose mother had died and he was left alone with a father who didn't care.

"Why?" Aaron asked. It drew Reid's gaze to him. There was such anger in his eyes right then.

"Because Diana Reid had schizophrenia and went off of her meds to have a child that they both wanted and after that, she was never the same. She got worse and worse until he couldn't take it anymore, but instead of taking his kid, he left both of them behind. William talked to me for the first time a day after she was killed. He put me up in a hotel because he didn't want the neighbors seeing me for even a day. The secretary helped me get my things that I wanted out of the house that I had been living in. After the funeral, I was put onto a bus. My things were kept at the secretary's office until I found an apartment that I liked. William did pay for it until I moved here. I don't think that he realized that he was." Reid pulled the file up and stood up, letting the paper ball fall to the floor. He tossed the file down in front of Aaron. "Their killer is a black man in his thirties with a severe limp and a hatred for all men who look close enough to him that don't."

Reid walked out of the room.

"Shit," Dave said.

Aaron looked at Dave and saw that the rest of the team was looking at him.

"I didn't know that. He's never shared that with me. I never thought much about him not going home to Vegas. I assumed that when he talked about going to California, he met up with his father there." Aaron thought about how Reid went out of his way to never talk about either of his parents.

"I didn't mean to-" Garcia stopped herself. She looked near ready to cry.
"No, no Baby Girl this is not your fault. We didn't know."

"If it were anyone else, I would say that I was worried about him walking around in the dark in Vegas, but this kid grew up here." Dave stood up and looked at Morgan. "Let's go and win some money to keep these two ladies in real alcohol and fake."

Aaron watched as the team filed out and he looked at his watch. He wasn't tired, and he didn't want to sleep. He thought about what he wanted to do. First, he wanted to go to the hotel and change out of the suit that he was in and get into more comfortable clothes. He would pocket enough money for what he wanted and not take any cards with him, just in case.

The area around the hotel they were in was dead even for being early in the evening. Aaron hadn't looked at many of the buildings in the area before then, but none of them looked like a place that he wanted to go to. He kept walking, but nothing was good. Finally, Aaron hailed a cab and had himself dropped off at the Strip.

The Strip was alive even though the sun had only been down for an hour. Aaron realized why Reid liked people watching at night. During the day people tended to watch what they were doing, but at night they used the cover of the darkness to get wild. Aaron watched so many people barely hiding when they were making out in the corners of doorways. It was interesting to watch. Some of them freaked out a little bit when they saw Aaron watching them, other got even more turned on.

Aaron wandered and wandered, and he didn't realize that he had a goal in mind until he was standing outside of what looked like a subway entrance but it wasn't. Aaron saw the name and the word Lupanar sounded familiar, but Aaron for the life of him couldn't remember why.

"What are you looking for?" A woman asked as Aaron got to the bottom of the steps.

"I don't know." Aaron looked around, and it was then that he realized what the place was and where he knew the name from the famous brothel in Pompeii. Aaron laughed. He felt a tug toward the back of the place. "I'm going to join a friend."

"Head on back, love."

Aaron walked back the way that she pointed but as soon as he could be turned a different direction. There was an area that was more curtained off than in a room. Aaron watched as a man who looked to be in his mid-forties entered a room. Aaron followed him and when he saw that it was Reid in that room. There were several glasses of what smelled like cheap as hell whiskey sitting around him.

"Heard you were waiting for me," the man said.

"No. He wasn't. Find someone else." Aaron used his Unit Chief voice. The man turned and looked at Aaron. Aaron glared at him for a few seconds before the man finally ran out of the room.

"You know that I paid for a blowjob and I expect one," Reid said looking up at him. Aaron grabbed the tumbler of whiskey from his hand and downed it. "So unless you are going to get down on your knees and suck my cock, you had better get out." Reid looked away from Aaron, so Aaron waited. Reid's eyes came back to him after thirty-seven seconds. "You are still here, and you are not on your knees."

"If you weren't pissed and upset at William Reid, you would have a little bit of shame at telling your boss to get on his knees and to suck your cock. You can't blame the alcohol because it's not something that would knock you on your ass. And while it looks like you have drunk about two bottles, I know that this cheap shit won't affect you. So I'm going to give you two options Reid.
Option one is that I turn around and I let that man come back in here."

"I think that I'll take that option, Hotch. So leave."

"I didn't give you option two."

"If option two doesn't involve you getting on your knees right now and sucking me until I blow, I'll take option one."

"No, option two does not involve me dropping to my knees here." Aaron paused and raised his hand up to stop Reid when he opened his mouth. "This floor looks clean, but I don't really trust it, and it's not carpeted, but given what happens here, I can understand why. We aren't at home where you can just walk down the street to the club and find someone to fuck so you are going to someplace that you either knew about when you were younger, or you asked about."

Reid was staring at Aaron, and his eyes were near dead. Aaron didn't like it.

"And I don't like to have sex in public. And my knees are too old for kneeling on hard floors. So I will give you sex if we go back to our hotel room."

Reid moved so fast that Aaron almost didn't see him move at all. Aaron didn't realize that Reid had moved him as well until he felt the wall against his back, he could barely see the room they had been in focusing on Reid instead. Reid had his hand on Aaron's throat, and unlike what Aaron had seen when Reid had Dev in mostly the same position, Aaron wasn't worried that Reid would hurt him. In fact, it was arousing to Aaron which told him that his thoughts about what was arousing anymore were a little skewed.

"It's not pity, Reid. I've not had sex in a long time and considering that my wife was regularly cheating on me and breaking my trust in other ways, I learned that I want trust in sex. I miss sex with anything but my left hand, and you want sex. I trust you."

"This is really stupid, Hotch." Reid let go of Aaron's neck and leaned back enough to where they could see the whole of each other's faces. "Who says that I want to have sex with you?"

"I think right now you want sex with anything that has a pulse and can give consent." Aaron leaned in and ghosted his breath over Reid's lips. Reid reached up and held Aaron still by his neck again, pressing him back into the wall enough to where Aaron would only be able to move if he cut off his air supply. Aaron tried to lean in enough to kiss Reid, but the God just grinned and pressed him back into the wall.

"So you have figured out what you want, have you?" Reid asked.

"I don't know if it's so much what I want."

"No, you have. You took a while to figure out that it was jealousy that you were feeling and not jealousy that Dev could be free but jealousy because he was the focus of my attention. I know my psychology, remember. I also know you. After four years, I know you rather well." Reid leaned in close again to where their lips were almost touching. "The only reason that I am saying yes is so because I know that you don't want sex with a God."

Aaron gasped as Reid leaned in and claimed his mouth, finally. Aaron tried to kiss him back, but it felt like electricity was dancing over his skin from the two points where Reid was touching him beside their lips. Reid didn't let up on the kiss and Aaron could only close his eyes in pleasure as he felt the weight of Reid's Godness rush over him.
Reid pulled out of the kiss a lot quicker than Aaron wanted and he made his displeasure known. He opened his eyes and parted his lips to tell Reid this, but when he did, he lost his thoughts as he took in the fact that they were in their hotel room. Reid was grinning.

"It's better than taking a cab back at this time of night. While climbing into your lap and kissing you senseless for the entire trip sounded good, I want this too bad to delay it. I'm going to the bathroom. You have two options while I am in there. If you keep your clothes on, we don't go any further than you giving me a blowjob, and I might reciprocate or just have you straddle me on the bed, and I jerk you off. Or you strip naked, and we go a lot further than blowjobs and handjobs." Reid didn't even look back as he turned to go into the bathroom.

Aaron sat down on the end of the bed that hadn't been used at all since they had arrived in Vegas. Reid had stayed at the house of the family that had their kid abducted. Aaron had used his but hadn't slept well at all. Aaron thought about what he wanted as he sat there. His first time for the sex act that Reid was suggesting was daunting, but with it being Reid doing it, it was less so. There wasn't a single other person, God or human that Aaron trusted to do it. Getting it out of the way early would be better for Aaron. If he hated it, Reid would understand if they ever did this again. Aaron wondered if Reid liked it and would allow Aaron to do it to him.

"Well, I see your mind has been made up." Reid was leaning in the doorway of the bathroom, the light was out in there, and only the two lamps by the beds were on. It was putting a lot of darkness on Reid and Aaron couldn't see his face.

"Not really. I'm not opposed to option two I'm just...unsure."

"Hmm. Okay. Then we can do option three, go with what feels good. Why don't we both strip down to our boxers and we can go from there."

Aaron blushed and looked away from Reid. He didn't know how to admit to the God that he hadn't put any on. Aaron's jeans were sinfully soft, and he loved the feel of them on his skin. Hands on his knees startled Aaron out of his decision. He looked to see Reid on his knees, and he was spreading Aaron's legs the way that he wanted. Reid grinned before his hands slipped up Aaron's legs to start to fiddle with his zipper pull. Aaron nodded and leaned back so that Reid had access as he started to tug down on the zipper. Like there was no rush to what they were doing, Reid tugged the zipper down tooth by tooth, watching as Aaron's skin was revealed little by little. Reid's free hand slid up and pushed Aaron back some to where he had to balance on his elbows to not fall all the way back, and for a few seconds, Aaron thought that it was what Reid wanted, but when the hand pulled away, Aaron knew it wasn't.

Reid looked at Aaron's form like he was memorizing it. Like it was one of his favorite books. Aaron shuddered as Reid finally made a move. He leaned down and inhaled. Aaron spread his legs as far as he could given his pants and leaned back a little more. Reid's hands settled on Aaron's knees for a few seconds before sliding up, pressing firm as he did. His thumbs swept up the sides of Aaron's cock, hard in his pants and barely confined anymore. Around to Aaron's back, the God's hands moved until he felt them curl in the hem of his pants and started to tug. Aaron closed his legs as much as he could with Reid between them and raised up on his arms so that Reid could drag the jeans down Aaron's ass and down to his thighs. Aaron's cock bobbed in freedom, and he nearly screamed when he felt a tongue slide of the head.

"Condoms?" Aaron asked.

Reid looked up at him, amusement in his eyes. "I don't have any STDs nor can I get you pregnant, despite me being a God my sperm won't give you a womb. If you would rather have one on, that's fine."
"I got a full battery of every single thing that can be transmitted after Haley, and it's just been my hands since then."

"That's not an answer, Hotch. I can head to one of thirteen places and get condoms for us if you want."

"You don't have any on you?"

"No. I don't carry condoms around on cases." Reid looked at Aaron like he was a little insane to think that. "How often do you think I have sex with someone?"

"I didn't mean it like that. I just...Morgan carries them, I've been him carry them. I don't know if he uses them or thinks he will, or they are a thing that he carries because he always has a go bag with him and it's better than being in a wallet. Fuck this. I'm sorry. I wasn't trying to call you a player or whatever the current term for a man who likes sex is." Aaron shifted his balance to one hand and ran the other through his hair. He looked down at Reid and grabbed him by the back of his neck, pulling him up to kiss him.

Aaron lost himself in that kiss as he parted his lips and allowed Reid to turn the kiss deeper. Aaron lost his balance and fell backward taking Reid with him. Aaron tangled his hands in Reid's hair, loving the softness of it. It was wonderful, feeling Reid's weight on him. Knowing that they were probably equally matched. Aaron didn't have to be gentle. That thought sent a spark of arousal through Aaron, and he tightened one of his hands in Reid's hair. Reid's hips jerked and pressed Aaron down into the bed more.

"Do you have lube?" Aaron asked when jerked out of Aaron's hold and sat up to stare down at him.

"Yes, I have lube. It's in my kit in the bathroom. I didn't want to bring it out and make you upset by telling me it wasn't needed. Naked. You need to be naked before I get back."

"You get naked as well." Aaron pushed at Reid's shoulder making the God finally move. Aaron watched Reid near run to the bathroom to grab the lube. Aaron worked his pants off as well as his socks and shoes, tossing them well away from the bed before he worked on his shirt. Reid was shirtless when he left the bathroom. The lube was between his lips, and his hands were working on the buttons of his slacks, the belt already hanging open. Aaron watched Reid let gravity take his pants down as he started to push at his underwear. The color was a very bright purple. The socks on his feet were mismatched just like every other time that Aaron had seen him in his socks. Aaron wondered if it was on purpose or if he didn't care that he grabbed two different pairs of socks.

When Reid was naked, he finally climbed up onto the bed, straddling Aaron's waist and looked down at him. Reid splayed a hand on Aaron's stomach before he leaned down to kiss him again. Their cocksbrushed, and Aaron hissed in pleasure at that simple touch. Reid grinned at him before he shifted around on the bed a little. Aaron wasn't sure what he was doing until he felt a hand wrap around his cock. Reid kissed him again before he started to place kisses down Aaron's cheek. The hand on Aaron's stomach left, and it dug under his head to where Aaron felt surrounded by Reid.

"I bet you are going to look so pretty, on the bed, your legs spread and my cock in your ass. I bet you will take it like you were made for it," Reid whispered into Aaron's ear. A nip followed, and Aaron couldn't help the thrust of his hips. "I've imagined this, Hotch. You wanting this. You wanting this from me. And my mind, it conjured up lifelike images in it. I could almost feel your hole clenching my cock so hard as you came that I swore I'd be chaffed when I opened my eyes."

Aaron heard the snap of the lube being opened right by his ear. Reid's hand left Aaron cock and snaked its way out from between them. There was the squelch of lube being pushed out of the tube
"Please," Aaron begged because he had never been as aroused as he was at that moment in time. He felt like he was going to die if he didn't come.

"I'm not stopping you, Hotch." Reid bit at Aaron's ear again and the nip of pain had Aaron coming. He jerked in Reid's loose hold on his body, and he felt Reid's shudder. Aaron hoped though as he laid there that Reid hadn't orgasmed as well. "I'm going to get between your legs now."

Aaron nodded, unable to talk as he watched Reid do precisely as he said he was. The young God's hand was covered in lube and what Aaron knew was his release. He was shocked that Reid didn't clean it off his hand. Reid used his clean hand to lift Aaron's left leg up, and before Aaron could even ask what Reid was going to do, he felt fingers brushing over his hole. Aaron was relaxed from orgasm, and the first finger slipped inside of him easy, aided by the lube and release. Aaron had been fingering himself in the shower aided by his conditioner. He'd liked what he did to himself, but this felt so much better.

"More," Aaron demanded.

"Do you like this?" Reid asked.

"Yes." Aaron raised his other leg some to give Reid more access. "More than I thought that I would when I realized that I found men arousing."

"And that was that night you watched me?"

"Yes."

"How did you never notice it before?" Reid asked.

"I don't cheat. I looked, and I never thought anything of recognizing that a male was beautiful or I liked the way clothes looked on their body. I never felt arousal from it."

"So was it just me?"

"No. I bought a video. Cash. DVD, I guess." Aaron shuddered as Reid pushed in again with two fingers. It felt strange, but Aaron liked it. Aaron felt Reid's hot breathe on his ear. He turned his head to try and take his lips in a kiss, but Reid just laughed and pulled his fingers free of Aaron's ass. He sat up and looked down at Aaron.

"How do you want to do this?"

"What do you mean?"

"There are a variety of positions we can do. All are good as long as I'm careful and we go slow." Reid grabbed a shirt that was on the floor. Aaron remembered seeing Reid drop it there when they had got a call before he could get fully changed. He cleaned his hand off before grabbing the lube and setting it down on Aaron's chest. "Lube me up."

Aaron let go of the bed when he realized that he had a death grip on it. He picked up the lube and poured some into his hand. He looked down at Reid's cock, really looking for the first time. It was longer than Aaron's but around the same girth. Aaron poured a little more into his hand before dropping it off the side of the bed.

"You can never have too much lube. Anyone who tells you otherwise likes getting off hurting
someone. I don't. Not like that. Biting I do like, sometimes. Do you like biting?"

"I don't know." Aaron hadn't thought about anything like that before.

"Well if you like this part, we can see about if you like more things."

"What is your favorite position?"

"Depends on what I am feeling like. I think right now, I want you right like this. How do you feel about that?"

"Yes."

Aaron reached out and touched Reid's cock with his hand that didn't have lube on it. There was a drop of fluid there. Aaron caught it on the tip of his finger and drew it up to his lips. He kept his eyes locked with Reid's as he slipped his finger in his mouth. Reid tasted a lot different than Aaron did. He wondered if it was the fact that Reid was a God.

"Please, hurry," Reid begged a little as he licked his lips. Aaron moaned as he wrapped his other hand around Reid's cock. It felt so hot in his hand. He thought about how that it would feel inside of him. Aaron pulled his hand away and wiped it on the bed. He didn't care about keeping the bed clean. There was another bed that Aaron could sleep in.

Reid scooted a little closer as he leaned back again, looking down. Aaron watched him and didn't look down, so he jumped a little when he felt the head of Reid's cock breach his hole. Aaron could feel the warmth of it as Reid slowly slid inside of him.

Aaron felt Reid's hips press into his. "Fuck," Aaron said because he felt full. He grabbed at that sheets on the bed again and tried not to move. He didn't know if he would hurt himself or Reid.

"Breathe, Hotch, breathe." Reid's voice was right there in Aaron's ear. Reid was on top of him again, they were chest to chest. Aaron felt surrounded again, and he loved it. "I'm going to start moving."

"Okay." Aaron nodded as hard as he felt he could get away with as he felt Reid start to pull out.

"No."

"No?" Reid asked as he stopped. Reid pulled back to where he could look down into Aaron's face.

"No what?"

"Cold," Aaron said.

"Okay. Okay. We can do something different. Let me lean up." Reid pushed up some and Aaron nodded. Reid's hands moved toward Aaron's legs and bent them up more, pressing them into his sides. Aaron moaned as it shifted the cock inside of him and that felt good. Reid leaned back down again and settled there, pressing Aaron's legs into his chest, but it let them get closer. Let Aaron feel like he was being pushed down into the bed and owned. "This good?"

"Yes."

"Good. Now, are you ready for me to move?"

"Yes."

Aaron felt Reid gently rock outward some but not enough to where Aaron felt empty. Reid pushed back in, and it rocked Aaron's body. Aaron let go of the bed and grabbed Reid's shoulders. Aaron
wiggled his hips a little, and his cock moved to where every time that Reid moved, it was rubbed between their bodies.

"Do you like my warm cock inside of you?" Reid asked.

"Yes."

"Good because it loves being inside of you. You are tight and perfect. Fuck." Reid buried his face in Aaron's neck, their bodies rocking. Aaron shifted his legs after a while. He wanted to see how it would feel with his legs wrapped around Reid's back. He was flexible from running and swimming. Reid's pace picked up after that. His teeth found a hollow in Aaron's neck and clenched. Aaron's body went taut, and he was almost there, almost on the edge of orgasm. Aaron let go of Reid's shoulder and reached up to grab his hair. Aaron almost jerked him back, but instead, he pushed Reid's face into him more. Reid's teeth clenched harder on Aaron's neck, and Aaron felt warmth start to fill him up. Aaron almost felt like his insides were going to burn, but they didn't, and it started to feel so good. Reid's cock was still pumping inside of him and sliding in and out. The warmth was too much, Aaron couldn't hold on. He came with a cry that he didn't muffle in any way.

Aaron kept his legs wrapped around Reid for as long as he could. Reid was still so damned warm, almost too much but Aaron didn't want to leave. He didn't want Reid to leave either. One of them had to get up and get things to clean up. Aaron had no clue what to do on that because he was usually the one to clean up Haley but he was on the receiving end in this.

"You look like you have become part of the bed." Reid chuckled before leaning in to kiss Aaron.

Aaron submitted to the kiss and lost himself in it. There was no passage of time during it. For all Aaron knew hours could have passed. If it wasn't for the fluid still wet between them, it could have been morning for all Aaron knew.

"Let's both get up and take a shower before you go to sleep."

"Okay."

Reid was the first to get up, and Aaron was pulled up with him. Aaron felt like an octopus, wrapped around Reid as they made their way to the bathroom. The water was turned on in the actually nice sized shower stall, and Reid pressed Aaron into the cold assed tile.

"Hey!" Aaron called out, but Reid didn't let him up. Instead, he pushed Aaron even harder into the wall and took his mouth in another kiss. Aaron growled and shoved, not stopping until Reid was the one pressed into the wall on the opposite side. Aaron felt hardness pressed into him as he kissed Reid. Aaron knew his own refractory period, but he didn't know Reid's. He hadn't seen what had happened after the waitress had gone into the room at the club. Reid thrust up into Aaron, rocking his cock onto Aaron's body.

Aaron reached out and felt the water, finding it up to temperature to where he would at least stand it, Aaron pulled out of the kiss and drew Reid with him under the spray. Aaron grabbed the rag he had been using and started to wash himself off. Reid grabbed his rag and did the same. Reid's eyes were closed, his cock still hard. Aaron couldn't take his eyes off of him. He saw bits of the bird on his back and saw that it was old looking. The tattoo looked like it had been on his back many years instead of just the under ten it would have been. Aaron wondered if it was a sign of him being a God.

Finishing off first, Aaron poked Reid until the young God turned to where Aaron could see his back. Reid was under the spray and braced his arms on the wall in front of him. Aaron grabbed the bottle
of conditioner from the walk but stopped when he saw something that he had never noticed before. A bottle of lube tucked just behind Reid's shampoo. Aaron grabbed it.

"I'm not going to be getting hard again, but I can take care of you. Do you want that?"

"Do what you want."

"Dangerous words. I could want to do a lot of things to you."

"I know you aren't into anything that I wouldn't want. You don't seem like someone who would get off on pissing on someone."

"No," Aaron chuckled. He coated both his palm of one hand as well as his fingers on the other. He barely remembered Reid fingering him. It wasn't because he hadn't done a lot of it, but Aaron was focused on his feelings than the actual act. Aaron used his hand to spread Reid's cheeks a little to see his hole. He kept his eyes on the back of Reid's head as he rubbed the tip of his pointer finger over the pucker there. Reid shudder, and his head dropped down. Total submission. Aaron grinned as he pushed that finger inside of Reid. Reid scooted his feet apart to where he could spread his legs and allow Aaron access to his hole more.

"Three."

"What?"

"I like being fucked with three fingers. So please work up to that."

"You like being stretched apart?"

"Yes. Your cock is the perfect size that I like to be fucked with. I want to feel that soon. When you are okay with it." Reid hissed as Aaron wrapped his other hand around his cock. "Fuck. Harder. Don't care which, just harder."

Aaron tightened his hold on Reid's cock and pulled out his fingers long enough to press two back inside. Reid stayed still even though Aaron could feel that he wanted to fuck Aaron's hand. Aaron pushed in and out a few times before he pushed in all the way and sought out Reid's prostate.

"For a novice at this, you are doing, fuck, a lot better than I thought."

"I've played with my own prostate while jerking off in the shower. I did say that I was sick of my hands. Plural."

"I just figured that your right hand got jealous of the left."

"Imp." Aaron loosened his hold on Reid's cock in payback for that. Reid laughed and squeezed his ass muscles around Aaron's fingers. "Are you always going to be like this?"

"Want?"

"Do you always get hard again so quick?"

"Depends. You got hard quick again too, but I know it's an occasional thing."

"Are you calling me old?"

"No. Distinguished." Reid pushed back on Aaron's hand, taking his fingers inside of himself deeper. He rocked forward into Aaron's hand next. It was nice feeling Reid taking his pleasure but teaching
Aaron at the same time what he liked, how hard, how fast and so many other things. Aaron’s only experience with sex had been taught at Haley’s hands. She didn’t like rough, she barely liked it when Aaron went too fast for her enjoyment after she had got hers. Reid though showed his pleasure in every single arch of his body, every noise that he made. He loved sex, and he wanted it badly.

"Close?" Aaron whispered into the wet skin of Reid’s shoulder as he looked over it to watch his hand on Reid’s cock. Aaron wanted to do this again but with his cock inside of Reid. This was dangerous, exciting, and if it had been anyone else caught in a sexual relationship with a man near half his age, Aaron would have been upset. This though. Aaron pressed three fingers inside of Reid as he started to jerk Reid’s cock harder. Reid let out a shaky moan, and Aaron felt his entire body tense as he came all over the shower wall.

Aaron watched it all wash away as the water hit, pulling his fingers from Reid’s body. When it was gone, Reid grabbed Aaron's hand and washed it as well as the other very carefully. Aaron didn't stop him when he turned off the water and wrapped Aaron's arm around his chest before starting out of the shower.

Now that he was clean, Aaron started to feel tired. Too many emotions and doing too much with not enough sleep had Aaron wanting sleep. He looked at the clock and saw that it was three a.m. and it was way too late for him to get enough sleep but he would get as much as he could.

"Are you going to stay?" Aaron asked as he looked at the bed after finishing drying off standing in the bedroom area of the hotel room.

"If you want."

"I do."

"Then get dressed. I don't sleep in bed with someone else while naked."

"Picky."

"Always."

Aaron grabbed pants to sleep in and wasn’t shocked when Reid dressed in a pair of pants and a T-Shirt. Aaron laid down and pulled the blankets up and over him. He watched as Reid grabbed a book with a book light from his bag and wandered over to him. Reid slipped into the bed and patted his thigh. Aaron used it as a pillow and felt his body relax as Reid laid a hand in his hair before turning off the lamp at the bedside. The small light from the booklight didn't bother Aaron at all. Instead, it helped him go to sleep even faster.
Chapter 16

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

The creation of a New God isn’t just a random thing. There are signs for a long time before, and if one looks, one can find who they point to. I can find a New God years before they become a New God. Some I like to go and watch over. I can see the makings of a God of Psychology in a young man in Nevada. His want to cure his mother will have him go far in the world. I can see the makings of a God in a man in Virginia but what kind of God, I can't tell that yet. He's so far away from becoming a God, the impact event hasn't happened yet.

Still, I can see the waves long before there is even the thinking of a tidal wave and I make sure that I am there for that event because watching a God become a God is a great event. I like being the one that is there to trip that human into becoming a God.

April 2009

"It's okay to be sad and miss him right?" Stan asked.

"Of course it is," Aaron said, and he looked up to see Reid standing at the doorway to Stan's room. "He was a friend. He was good to you when you were together."

"Why does he feel different?" Stan asked, and Aaron looked back at him to see the boy pointing at Reid. "I've never felt someone like him."

Reid grinned at Stan before he came in and crouched in front of the boy. Stan reached out his hands and felt Reid's face.

"Your senses are on overdrive because they know that there is something different about me, but they don't know what. Next time you'll know. I'm a New God, Stan."

"That's cool. A New God saved me."

"Do you think that you can sleep? You need to." Reid looked at Stan with a fond look on his face, and Aaron knew that the boy had wormed his way into everyone on the team's hearts.

"Yes."

"Good. I'll send your mother in and have her tuck you in." Aaron started toward the door to find his mother. Aaron wasn't that worried about her not raising him right. She had done well after the death of Stan's biological mother.

"Good night. Thank you."

"You are welcome," Aaron and Reid said at the same time. Stan smiled, and Aaron laid a hand on Reid's lower back to escort him from the room. Reid looked at him briefly but didn't move out of the touch.

"Will he be all right?" Aaron asked Reid as they stepped out of the hallway and into the living room area where Morgan and Dave were. JJ and Prentiss were back at the station finishing up things there.

"Yeah, he will." Reid was looking at Morgan who was talking to the mom.
"We ready?"

"Thank you again," the mom said.

"Really it's no problem." Reid smiled at her and waved before leaving. Stan had connected with Morgan and Reid both on the case, and Aaron could see that the boy connecting with him had freaked Reid out a little bit. Aaron wondered what Reid would want when they got back to the hotel. They had a little time before they had to leave to catch the Jet to leave.

Sex was still on the table but only on cases. Aaron wanted to be upset about that, but he didn't know how to broach it with the God. There wasn't a primer on having sex with the New God on the team.

"We normally wouldn't rush out like this," Morgan said with a smile as he shook the mother's hand. "But we have a member of the team that is a new mom, and this was her first case back, and with Stan being a focal point it's kind of shook her up."

"No, I understand. You guys have a safe trip home."

Aaron let everyone exit before he did. He pulled the house door shut behind him and looked up. He saw the motorcycle as it turned the corner and something felt wrong. Something felt very wrong. Aaron settled his hand on his gun and watched as the cycle approached.

"DUCK!" Aaron yelled before he even knew what was wrong. He aimed and just after the man on the motorcycle drew his gun and fired, Aaron was firing a shot. The person on the motorcycle fell. Aaron kept an eye on the body that was on the road as he approached. Aaron heard Morgan and Dave moving around him, but he wasn't paying attention. The gun that had been drawn was flung halfway across the road. Morgan ran to clear it as Aaron stepped up to the body. He nudged it and waited. No noise. Aaron crouched and checked for a pulse. None. The glass of the helmet was shattered, and Aaron could see when he rolled the body that he had put it through the man's eye.

"Reid?" Dave called out.

"I'm fine. It was a through and through. Inside of my left arm."

"You look grey," Dave said.

Aaron nodded at Morgan as he raised his phone to his ear to call this in. Aaron turned to check on Reid himself. Reid had his hand wrapped around the flesh of his arm while Dave hovered near him, unsure if the God would let him get close. Reid though was staring at Aaron like Aaron had been shot. Aaron wasn't sure what that look on Reid's face was, and he didn't know if he wanted to know what it meant.

"Reid, you are going to the hospital."

"Yeah, so are you and we won't be going home tonight."

"What?" Aaron asked. He looked down at himself.

"Rossi, how do you feel?" Reid didn't look away from Aaron though as he asked the question.

"A little drunk actually."

"Morgan?" Reid asked.

"The same. Reid this man has a marking on him."
"Yup. He is a disciple of a small group of Old Gods who see it as their right to kill all New Gods before they become New Gods. The thing is that whatever power creates us doesn't like it when it fails in making a New God that God become a God a little earlier after a failed assassination mission."

"But you are already a God."

"Yes. I am."

"Why do Rossi and I feel drunk?" Morgan asked.

"Rossi, do you want to field that?"

"It only makes sense if whoever he was trying to kill became the God they were supposed to be. You are already a God."

"And now so is Hotch."

"WHAT?" Three thunderous voices asked as sirens picked up from the arriving officers to cover the scene.

"The last time I saw the group of assassins was the day of the wreck. If you know what to look for, you can see the God being born years before. Small things that happen. I was shocked when I started to see them after joining the team. I saw many things happen that I was sure would turn him into a God."

"What the hell am I the God of?" Aaron asked, his voice frantic. He didn't need this. He couldn't be a God. He backed away from Reid staring at him as he did. This could not be real, he felt like himself. He felt no different. "What the hell can I be the God of?"

"I have a few guesses," Reid said. Reid stood up, even though Dave tried to keep him down. "I'm fine. A few band-aids and I'll be fine."

"Bandaids?" Morgan asked, but Aaron could feel Morgan's eyes on him. "You were shot."

"Yes, and it was a through and through, and I know it didn't hit a nerve or nick an artery. The doctor might put in a stitch or two, but I don't need them."

"Given how you can't sit still, I can see them putting them into you."

"Can we please get back to how you think I am a God?" Aaron demanded.

"What do you think that purple bracelet on you meant?" Reid asked, looking at Aaron again.

"What?" Aaron stopped breathing for nearly a minute at that. "It was a mark to claim me to keep people away."

"No, Hotch. There is a reason why you never could ask. You'd think about it, and then something would happen, or something would distract you. Every single person with a purple band will become a New God."

"But Dev's was a tattoo. Why would het get a tattoo of it?"

"That's how it looks to other potentials. Humans see them all as bands, but other potentials see the bracelets on other potentials as tattoos. It's something to do with the powers of the Gods who run the place."
"Who runs it?"

"Yeah, no."

"What happened?" Prentiss asked as she stepped up to them. JJ went right for Reid, helping him by taking off the light overshirt she was wearing and using it to help with the blood from his wound. Aaron listened to Morgan and Dave tell them everything. Reid was still staring at Aaron. They left out why the man had shot at them.

"So he opened fire and shot Reid?" JJ asked as she finally looked at Aaron.

"He got off a single shot of what I assume was going to be more before Hotch shot him in the eye."

"In the eye?" Prentiss asked.

Aaron's phone rang, and he looked at it. It was Strauss. "Hotchner."

"We are getting calls from several Gods inside of the FBI that put it that one has emerged, but no one can figure out where except that it's close to where you and your team are."

"Yes, Ma'am. What else do they know?"

"Nothing much."

"You told me that the Director wanted to talk about that squad inside of the BAU to handle all God related things? When I get back, I think that it's time that Reid and I picked some people for it."

"Why?" Strauss asked she sounded upset.

"Because the God who emerged was almost assassinated."

"How?"

"Gunshot. I killed the assassin. I'll debrief you when I get back."

"Is the God fine?" There was such happiness in her voice. "Does he know who saved him? Would he be willing to come in and talk to us."

"Yes, yes, and maybe, Chief Strauss. I need to go and deal with this scene."

"Don't worry. Your name will be withheld until you want it known, even from the higher-ups. Your role as a God now supersedes any contract agreements that you made with the FBI." Reid grimaced as he spoke.

"Seriously?" Morgan asked.

"Yes. Nothing can be concealed that will harm him or another member of the FBI, but his status as a God is now secret. I didn't even have to let anyone on this team know," Reid said.

Aaron though didn't care about hiding that. He didn't care if Strauss knew. It would only be another thing that she hated about him and saw as something that he would use to take her job when he didn't want it. He was quite happy where he was. Strauss would never understand why he didn't want her job. He didn't care about more money or a better job. In his eyes, he had the best job.

"Look, no matter what Hotch and I aren't leaving tonight. You guys can leave so that JJ can get home and we can follow when we can."
"Why?"

"Because of politics. The FBI doesn't like Gods getting assassinated when they are trying their level best to make the FBI the place to go when one becomes a God. If this area isn't flooded with agents before the morning, I would be shocked."

"The Director has wanted a BAU team that looks into Gods and anything that deals with Gods. A God involved in a murder, they go. Strauss has been hesitant about it because they wanted Reid for it."

"Yeah, no. I can't stand most of my kind on a good day much less being there at their worst."

"Why does Hotch need to go to the hospital?" Dave looked like he wanted to go with them but also stay to make sure the scene was taken care of.

"Testing to confirm what he is."

"How?"

"Temperature and a look at his blood cells under a microscope. Our blood is different. There is a reason I can't donate blood. My blood would hurt anyone that it was given to, even if it was another God."

"There is so much that even we don't know," Prentiss said.

"There is a lot that I don't feel you need to know. Getting blood on your skin won't hurt you but ingesting it or sticking it inside of yourself will hurt you. It's not like all of a sudden someone on the team was going to jam a needle in me and take out blood before putting it into yourself. I don't know a lot about each of you, and I never demanded to know anything about any of you. Even when Morgan was being an ass and Garcia was scared of me. I never pushed. So please give me the same courtesy."

"Sure. Do you want us to stay or go?" Dave asked.

"I don't care. I'm going to talk to the paramedic and see if I can get out of riding the back of that damned thing." Reid started toward the ambulance as it pulled up. Aaron nodded after him, and Morgan nodded back following him.

"Aaron?"

"I don't know. Fuck, Dave, I don't...I can't be a God."

"Reid's not the lying kind and something like this, I don't see him lying at all."

"What the hell am I the God of? Broken marriages?"

"I think that I would be the most likely candidate for that."

"Assholes?"

"I know of people who are more of an asshole."

Aaron growled at Dave before following Reid over to the ambulance. The paramedic had Reid's shirt off of one side and was cleaning up the blood. Aaron looked at the wound and felt his stomach twinge. Dave did not follow him over, and Aaron was thankful for that.
"You can ride in the front," Reid said without looking up at Aaron. His eyes were focused on the wound on his arm. Aaron didn't say anything as he walked around the ambulance to get in the front with the driver. A few minutes later there was a thump on the wall that separated the front from the back. The ambulance was put into gear, and they started off. Aaron could just barely hear the EMT talking to Reid. If Reid had been the only thing that going to the hospital was needed for, Aaron knew that Reid would have just asked to be treated on site, but Aaron knew that Strauss would have had a fit. Strauss loved Reid. She probably wanted to groom him to take Aaron's place after she got him fired. Strauss had tried several times over the years. The college case almost three years before. She had failed each time, mainly because of the team's staunch support.

"I've never had a call to pick up a New God for any injury."

"I think he's going in just to have me go in as well."

"You look fine."

"Mentally, I'm a wreck." Aaron pursed his lips as he thought about his confession. He hadn't started to process anything yet. He understood why a God had to go to a local hospital. It wasn't like a switch was flipped. He didn't feel different, but he knew that Reid was right, he was different. The thing was that the difference wasn't from today. No, the difference had been changing slowly. He was just now seeing the changes for himself.

Aaron was the first out of the truck when they stopped in the ambulance bay. He was at the back doors when the EMT in the back opened it. Reid had been sitting beside the EMT on the bench and was just starting to stand up.

"You and I are going to talk as soon as we are alone."

"Of course, Hotch." Reid didn't look away from Aaron's face even though Aaron could tell that he wanted to. He nodded toward where a nurse was coming out to meet them.

"Gunshot to the upper arm, through and through. No nerves or arteries hit," Reid said when the nurse got close. She looked at the EMT who had been with Reid in the back and Aaron saw the man nod.

"Alrighty then, well. Sir, come with me."

"Also New God intake," Aaron said pointing at himself.

"The doctor that we have for that is on call. It'll take him about half an hour to get in here. He is also the only person allowed to work on Gods."

"Really? I guess then that we had better call him because I am a New God, just not a new New God."

"Okay. We have a single room set up. Do you mind sharing?"

"No, that's fine," Aaron said before Reid could say anything else. Being stuck in the room and unable to leave was perfect for what Aaron had in mind. The nurse showed them to the first room. Reid's shirt was still off of his arm but draped over him with the arm on the inside.

"I'll call the doctor, and he will be here as soon as possible. We've had one other God treated here. She was injured on vacation. So please forgive us if we are a little rusty."

"The only thing I don't forgive is assholes," Reid said with a smile. The nurse laughed and left them
alone.

"Sit."

"No, thanks. I'd rather stand," Reid said, and he moved toward the window. Aaron reached out and grabbed his good arm.

"No. You are going to sit down, and you are going to answer my questions."


"All of the above. You still look grey, Reid and it's worrying me a little. You state that it's not bad, but you have been grey since the first time I saw you after you had been shot."

"It's nothing to do with me being shot."

"Then what does it have to do with?"

"Something impossible that happened, and right now my brain is too fried to even start to explain it. After I rest and get my head around it, I will tell you."

"I'll hold you to that." Aaron directed Reid to sit down on the gurney that was in the room. Aaron stepped up to him, and Reid's legs split on their own allowing Aaron to slip in between them. Aaron touched Reid's shoulder on his injured side, and Reid nodded. Aaron stripped his shirt off of him, taking care to not jostle the wound. The light dressing around it was just now getting soaked through in blood. "How long have you known that I could become a God?"

"It's hard to explain. There is a feel to Gods, and that is how we know each other. For potentials, it's a whisper in our minds. Sometimes it's hard to pinpoint where the whisper is coming from and other it is not. With you, I felt it while I was at the Academy and I only knew it was you the first day that I met you. I know that your next question is why I didn't tell you and well that was pressed upon me just after I became a God. Potential is just that potential. There is no guarantee. Sometimes telling someone about it before they become a God means that they change and that change makes them unable to actually be a God anymore."

"That's a damned good reason but why did you start anything with me?"

"Because I wanted to is the only answer I can give you."

"There has to be more. You are a God of Psychology." Aaron stopped because Reid flinched. It was barely there, but he did. Aaron wondered about that. "So tell me why you started this with me."

Reid looked away from Aaron. Aaron reached out and grabbed his chin to force Reid to look at him.

"Why?"

"Don't, Hotch please. Just accept that there was no ulterior motive other than I wanted you for who you are and nothing less and nothing more. There is no more motive than that."

"You've told m that Gods don't spend long times in relationships with humans. I took that at face value but what is this between us?"

"Do we have to discuss this now?"

"Hello?" A voice called out before the door was opened. Aaron dropped his hand from Reid's chin quickly and turned to see the doctor standing there. "Well, Doctor Reid. I heard the BAU was in
town, but I didn't think to see you in here with a gunshot wound."

"Malcolm, right?" Reid asked as he slipped off the gurney, forcing Aaron to take a few steps back.

"For the time being yes. Doctor Malcolm Sheets."

Reid snorted and tried to cover up a laugh, but he tried to use his bad arm for it and grimaced.

"Bad sheets? Of all the names. Aaron Hotchner, New God, of what we are unsure, I'd like you to meet Apollo, slumming it seems with a horrible name that is going to make Artemis cringe but give him a fond smile."

"Wonderful to meet you Hotch." Apollo looked at Aaron with a weird look on his face before he looked at Reid. Reid shrugged one of his shoulders. "I'll fix up our little rogue here and then deal with you."

"Sure," Aaron said as he stepped back away from Reid and took a seat in the chair.

"Do they even know they have a God working for them?"

"No. I spent many years going through medical school and hiding what I am. I work for a larger hospital about an hour away but am on call for many smaller hospitals. I just happened to be in town. When my aide called and said I had a new intake, which I felt by the way, and another God injured with a gunshot wound, I expected it to be you."

Aaron listened with half an ear as they talked about school while Apollo worked on Reid's arm. Aaron laughed when Apollo pressed a sling onto Reid and glared until he slipped it on.

"So, let's look at you, tall dark and handsome. I can see why Spencer jumped into bed with you."

Aaron looked at Reid with a glare, but Reid was adjusting his arm in the sling. Aaron looked at Apollo and saw that he was looking at Aaron like he was seeing inside of him.

"I'll draw your blood and let you leave before I process it and send it to the FBI if that is what you want?"

"Can it go directly to the Director?"

"I can totally mark it that way, and it will happen that way. The FBI knows exactly who I am and they have chosen to stay out of it. I can use my real name to send it out. No one will fight that. I can tell that Spencer is right. You are a brand spanking new New God. I look forward to finding out what you are."

"It's not going to pop out on your screen when you run the blood?"

"No. Only you and those around you will figure it out. Skills like mine are easy. I get medical things. Along with other things. Spencer understood psychology and everything to do with mental diseases. He's a regular prodigy and has always been. You'll find out what you are. Is there anyone that you don't want to get this?"

"Anyone but the Director until I arrive in DC to talk to him."

"Good. I'd take Spencer with you. He's good at making people do what he wants with little words. Anything else either one of you need?"

Apollo came back over to where Aaron was with a needle and a vial in his hand. He waved for
Aaron to take a seat beside Reid and Aaron did. He settled in on the gurney and took off his jacket before just stripping out of his shirt. It was easier than rolling up his sleeve. He had a T-shirt on underneath.

The blood draw was quick and efficient, and Aaron had never had a better blood draw.

"Can I have you do all of my FBI check up draws? I've never had one be that easy," Aaron said as he gave Apollo a gentle smile. He knew that he should have been freaked out, but he wasn't. Reid had got him used to being around Gods. Apollo didn't answer him right away but instead just smiled at him and wrote on the vial.

"So you two are good to go. Spencer, I will be following up on your wound. See your doctor in Virginia or else."

"Or else what?"

Apollo grinned at Reid, and the smile on his face was very scary to Aaron.

"Do you remember that party-"

"Okay," Reid said cutting off Apollo with a motion of his hand.

"Good now. Go."

Apollo picked up a blank chart. Aaron realized that they had never signed in or done anything really that they usually would have.

"What about paperwork?"

"I'll be taken care of. So I'm hungry."

"You are always hungry," Aaron said with a smile. This he could handle. This he could do.

"I saw a dive bar down the street from the hotel. If JJ didn't check us out we can go back and change and hit that place up."

Aaron nodded, thinking about how he could drink and it not affect him anymore. Aaron stopped, reaching out and grabbing Reid's shoulder, not paying attention and it jerked him around.

"Doctor Reid, I have your prescriptions here," the nurse from before said, and she was holding out a piece of paper. Reid stepped over to her, jerking out of Aaron's hold with a glare before turning to face the nurse.

"Thank you. I'll drop these off before I go and get something to eat." Reid looked over the paperwork, and he signed something before handing it back to the nurse.

"What was that?"

"I had to sign for the narcotics I was given. I tend to forget about what I am doing, and Doctor Sheets understood that so he gave me something that will work long-term on my pain with not a lot of doses. I also tend to forget to take the pills that I am prescribed."

Aaron nodded his understanding, reading over Reid's shoulder as he signed another paper. Apollo had given Reid an antibiotic as well as a painkiller. It was standard on both, but there was something else a third prescription that Aaron didn't know. It was for a full year's supply given in month breakdowns. Aaron wondered what it was and he tried to remember the name. He didn't want to pull
out his phone and write it down. There was little to do except to wait for Reid to sign papers. Aaron had never gone with Reid during a case when he was injured. Usually, it was a small thing, sprained body part that didn't take long to heal. Aaron hadn't actually read up on the process for Reid being seen at a hospital outside of he knew that only an approved Doctor could look at him unless there were no God approved doctor around.

"You ready? If I drop these two off, I'll be good to pick them up after we eat. You should start to be feeling hungry. Actually, you should feel hungry for a few days. Not like starving but more like you feel like you should eat but don't have an urge to. Depending on what kind of God you settle to be, the want of food might not go away. Hermes it's said he ate a lot. The opulence of Gods in olden times was not always of their being Gods, but that much food and drink was necessary to feel whole."

"You've studied the Gods haven't you?" Aaron asked, and he felt stupid for never realizing that it was the only way that Reid would know what he knew about all of the Gods given his short status as a God himself. Aaron felt like he had a lot to learn, but at least he had someone with him that would help him learn it all. That it was someone that he trusted, that helped a lot.

Aaron was not shocked that the Director of the FBI showed up in Quantico inside of Aaron's office one of the times that Aaron slipped out for coffee. Aaron stopped in his tracks with his mug raised up to his mouth as he looked at the Director sitting and looking at the case file that Reid had dropped on Aaron's desk with notes to send off to the cops working the case. It was a consult that didn't need the team to go and help but just needed a new eye.

"Sir," Aaron said as he started to shut the door.

"I called down, and you didn't answer, but Doctor Reid answered his desk phone. He said you were getting coffee and would be in your office in a few moments. He'll be joining us as well."

"Of course, Sir." Aaron wasn't sure where he was supposed to sit. The Director was in a chair across from where Aaron sat, but it felt weird to sit there. Reid stepped into the room as Aaron was making a decision and he just moved things around on Aaron's desk and sat there. Giving the Director a line of sight of both of them and just showing Aaron Reid's back if he sat in his chair. Aaron bit the bullet and sat down in the chair, making sure that Reid shut the door. JJ had got the team the first flight out, and Aaron and Reid had gone right to the office and Aaron hadn't left it yet. Sheila was with Jack and would be as she didn't have any classes until the afternoon and Jessica was going to take Jack until Aaron was done with work.

"Three things were sent to me today by the God Apollo. One, your New God paperwork. Section Chief Strauss has been all over my ass to get the name of the New God that emerged because of your last case. Good work by the way Doctor Reid in talking the team through not telling anything in the report that would give it away on who became the God. Two was the paperwork for your gunshot wound, Doctor Reid. I'm glad it wasn't more serious, and I do agree with the medication that he put you on for the next year. I didn't even realize that it was something that a God working in a place like this would want."

"It's not much of a mood stabilizer, but with the fact that I don't sleep, my mind doesn't get to rest like it normally would so this helps. If I miss a day, it's fine. What it does is makes my mind rest for about two hours after I take it. I was put onto it in college when I was getting my first and fourth doctorates. I can still talk, but my brain goes at thirty-five miles per hour instead of ninety."

"And third?" Aaron asked. He crossed off his mental note to look up that pill that Reid had been given.
"Paperwork that is to be filled out when a God starts a relationship with a human, with the note attached that it's only needed if you decide to hide that you are a God." The Director was looking at Aaron as he spoke, but Aaron knew that it was only because the paperwork should have been filled out months before. Aaron knew that, but he hadn't wanted to broach it with Reid and him stop whatever the hell they were doing.

"Bah," Reid said and waved his hand in a dismissive manner. "I filled that out months ago and filed it with HR. It's under a lock to only be accessed by our direct supervisors if and when it's called into question. It's not like this team doesn't do shit that we shouldn't. We are a family, a little dysfunctional but still a family. We should technically all file something like it for each member of the team, or the BAU can be given a little leeway. We hunt horrible people and only have each other to trust, and it's made bonds that most don't understand. If we are in the hands of a psychopath, we trust that the team will know us well enough to understand what we are going to do to get out of the hands of the psychopath."

"That's what happened when you were caught by the New God Tobias Hankel after he snuck up on you and Agent Jareau on his property."

"Yes. Hankel focused on me because he didn't know what he was and I felt different to him. His mind was fractured by the abuse at the hands of his father, and when he became a God, it broke his mind instead of fixing it. He is the only God I have ever known that has gone insane from becoming a God."

"Hankel broke your ankle to stop you from escaping didn't he?"

"Yes. He didn't get what he wanted out of me, so he devolved even more. I know that it was traumatizing to see it and I know that the videos were saved and studied by others but at no point in that two-day stretch did Hankel ever get the upper hand on me."

"No that was very evident. So how is this going to work?"

"What do you mean?" Aaron asked, looking at the Director.

"Doctor Reid is very dominant when it comes to his Godness, and you are very dominant in everything that you do, Hotch. How the hell is it going to work with you being his boss?"

"No different than it does now," Reid said and he turned to actually look at Aaron before turning back to the Director. "This doesn't change team dynamics at all. Agent Hotchner already defers to me when it comes to dealing with Gods, Old, and New, so I don't see that changing as he is a newbie. I'll defer to him when I feel that it's needed in everything else, just as I always do."

"What's to stop you from thinking that you need to be the Unit Chief?"

"I don't want to be Unit Chief. I wouldn't get to do the fun things that I do if I did. I also don't want to have to deal with Section Chief Strauss anymore than I already have to and if I become Unit Chief, I would have to see and talk to her at least daily. I have no want of moving up in the chain of the BAU more than lead profiler one day. No one on the team is looking to displace Hotch as Unit Chief. Rossi is happy without having to deal with paperwork. Morgan has been stepping up a lot more and helping Hotch with paperwork when I don't. Garcia maintains herself and so doesn't JJ. Prentiss is happy to help when she's asked, but she is also stepping up more and more to help when it's not truly needed but appreciated. Any change in the dynamics will mess up the team, and we don't need that. George Foyet is still out there, and while the rest of the FBI isn't that worried about him, he has a target painted onto Hotch's back, and I will not let that psychopath beat us."
"You couldn't have known that he was going to escape."

"I told the jail he had been processed into, and the locals that he was going to try and escape and that extra care was needed, but they didn't listen and look what it got us. We have an ephebophile out there with an eye on our Unit Chief, and the fugitive retrieval squad is dragging its heels."

"Yes, I was made aware of your help." Aaron knew that tone of voice wasn't a good one. The Director was a little upset at the help that Reid had been giving the retrieval squad.

"You say that like I haven't been an actual help. I have kept it on the up and up and given them the bits of help that I could."

"I was forwarded the complaint from their Section Chief that was given to Strauss. Strauss asked me what to do."

"And did the complaint tell you that if they had followed what I had said, Foyet wouldn't have been in the wind? Foyet uses computers to hide. He's very good at what he does, and that's hiding. His medication is the way to track him, and I told them to make sure they tripped no alarms. He was where I said he was going to be and they fucked it up."

"Are you serious?" The Director sat forward in his chair and looked a little upset.

"Yes. By the time that they raided the place, he was gone because their analyst didn't listen to me."

"Why not?"

"You'll have to ask them. I was told to stay out of their business after they didn't catch Foyet so instead I have been sending updates to the Section Chief's boss. He is more than happy to field any help. For what I have got back from them, I think the FRS wants to one-up the BAU, instead of working together."

"You are still working the Foyet case?" Aaron asked because that was news to him. He thought about the nights that he heard Reid moving above him. It made sense. Even before they had landed in Boston, Reid had said that something was weird with the Boston Reaper case. Reid had never read it over before, probably because it wasn't that big, at least the BAU's part in it. Aaron had most of the files in her office.

"I always work cases until they are done, just because the team has to focus elsewhere doesn't mean that I do. What better things do I have to do at night?"

If it hadn't been for the Director sitting there, Aaron would have said that there were a lot of things that he could be doing at night that wasn't work-related and that one of them was Aaron.

"Just type up everything and send me what the FRS has sent you. I'll have this looked into. I promise. So the team is going to stay the same?"

"Yes. I will gladly come out as a New God when I feel ready."

"Doctor Sheets gave me a short list of things that he thought you could be the God of. I think that the final two of the three were just jokes. Time will tell."

The Director stood up, looking at the of them with a kind eye.

"The BAU is doing wonderfully. There are no complaints from above on anything that has been done that we know about. Just keep the relationship out of the office, please."
"Sure," Aaron said, and Reid just nodded. The director left the office and pulled the door shut behind him.

"Morgan wants to do a team dinner tonight at my place," Reid said as he showed Aaron his phone. The screen was lit up.

"Was the no sleep thing...Did it just start up?"

"You've been doing it for months, Hotch. You sleep less, wake up earlier you just haven't been tired, so you haven't noticed it. Your temperature has already settled at the higher normal. You just have to decide what you want to be told to everyone."

"I think, for now, I'd rather keep it under wraps to everyone but the team."

"Okay." Reid gave Aaron a smile that said that he wasn't upset at all but instead just seemed distracted. Aaron wondered what about, but he knew that Reid wouldn't tell him unless it was work related. Work was for work, sex was for during cases, and at home there was nothing. Aaron wasn't sure about at the moment, and why Reid was rigid, but he hoped to get through the walls Reid built up soon.
Chapter 17

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

The past always comes back to bite humans in the ass, but it is their singular ability to never see it coming that intrigues me. It's also been passed onto the Gods that live around them. Humans minds created us, they can destroy us and yet many Gods never see the end coming. I'm one of the lucky ones, the worship of me hasn't gone down. Humans covet knowledge, even if it's the knowledge of what their neighbor is doing to be able to afford that new car. It's easy to hide when one is good at it. I'm good at lying, even to the other Gods. I guess it's a good thing that I never cared to spend a lot of time with the Gods of my time. I was too interested in what I could learn. No one recognizes me that is alive anymore, at least my physical form.

There are sometimes though that hiding has its own detractors.

I've had many names over the millennia. Mimir was my favorite. I was known as Lugh in Celtic mythology. Seshat in Egyptian. The knowledge to know how to look like and be a woman is handy to know. Hermes in the Greek Pantheon. Enki to the Mesopotamian people. When knowledge was craved, I popped my head to be worship because knowledge is eternal and no other God is needed. Knowledge doesn't sleep. Knowledge is power the humans say, and power corrupts. When knowledge is craved to make one more than others it corrupts, but I'm proof that knowledge itself doesn't corrupt on its own.

I've had many names in my long life as a God, but none have made me happier than the name I currently use. Mimir was my favorite before but hearing my lover utter the name I took when he's asleep, and I return to bed to breathe with him, I wonder if I could subsist on his worship of my body alone.

May 2009

Aaron hated coming home in the middle of the night after a case, but no one wanted to stay in Detroit or Canada after the case. Aaron was worn out, and he really wanted to crawl into a bottle and never come out, but he had nothing on hand that would allow him to get drunk. Jessica had Jack for a bonding weekend, and Aaron was so thankful for that. The Brooks' family was hesitant about Jack, but Jessica had started to pull away from them when it was found out that many supported Haley after everything. Aaron didn't know what it was like to be the favored child that could do no wrong, but he had seen it in Sean.

The door shut harder than Aaron meant to shut it, showing him how worn out he was even though he was already not sleeping at all. Aaron was tempted to turn around and head down to Reid's to tell him that he didn't give a fuck about whatever hang-ups Reid had about sex happening at home, but Aaron wanted something, even if it was just laying in a bed with Reid. Or to tell Reid to give him one of those pills to help his brain just settle down.

Aaron walked to the cabinet where his alcohol was kept, and he stared at the bottle of bourbon that Reid had bought him months before after his drunken night out. Aaron wanted some of whatever it was that he had drunk there at the club. Aaron grabbed the bottle, and there was a flash of something behind him. Aaron turned around reaching for his gun. He sighed because he had taken it off and it was closer to the door as he took in George Foyet in front of him with the .44 magnum raised at him. Foyet's face was blocked by the mask that was synonymous with the Boston Reaper.
"You should have made the deal," Foyet said with the gun raised.

"And you should have thought about what the hell you were thinking coming in here," Reid said as he near appeared right at Aaron's shoulder, his own gun raised on Foyet. Aaron felt his gut clenching a little at the thought of Reid getting shot. Aaron swallowed, but he didn't move. He was too scared to.

"You should have seen my shock when I realized that uptight Aaron Hotchner is fucking the team God," Foyet said as he raised up his mask and stared at Aaron. "Is that the worship that is keeping you alive?" Foyet's eyes turned toward Reid. Aaron saw something in them that he didn't like.

Reid started to laugh. His gun never wavered even as he laughed so hard his body shook. Aaron knew precisely why he was laughing. It wasn't like Foyet to make a mistake like that.

"Look it up, George," Aaron said as he set the bottle of bourbon down and crouched down to get his backup gun from his holster on his ankle. Foyet's gun followed him for a second before going to Reid. "New Gods don't need worship to live."

"You are the only one to figure it out, Georgie," Reid said and his voice it was a different. It was strong and different and even with the situation that they were in, Aaron felt arousal in his body.

Aaron looked at Reid and saw a very wicked grin on his face. Aaron tried to process that. He tried to process the person standing in front of him as compared to what he had seen of Reid at work and during personal times. None of it meshed.

"So what are you the God of? I know it's not Psychology like you've touted. Are you the God of Taking Human Cock Up the Ass?"

"Very witty, Georgie. See the problem is that you've looked at this from the wrong angle. What kind of God could really hide as a New God of Psychology? I could have passed myself off as anything really, but a God of Psychology was very easy. I'm the God of Knowledge by the way. I'm known by a lot of names, but the main name is Mimir. The thing is Georgie you really should have thought this out more."

Aaron thought about the fact that Reid had to be lying about the fact that he was Mimir. Aaron knew of Mimir because his journals had been published not long after the fact that there were a lot of Old God still around. Aaron had read a few passages of one at a store and bought them. The entire collection of the journals were in Aaron's office, and he bought the new ones when they came out but never read them. There had been something about it though that had made Aaron stop reading them every single time he had picked them up after buying them. He would make it a paragraph further but then would stop and put it up.

"I planned to kill you, still looking like it's going to happen. You are too good to kill me without having made a move." Foyet was grinning at them.

"That's where you are wrong. See I killed Frank Breitkopf in cold blood because no matter what he was going to not just disappear. I didn't see Jane throwing herself off the cliff because of his death, her death did weigh on me."

Aaron looked at Reid like he had never seen the God before. He wondered if Reid was lying, but the look on his face and the way that he spoke told Aaron that he wasn't. Aaron looked at him and tried to see the God that Aaron had fallen in love with. He saw something darker but yet better at the same time. He saw chaos.
"Mimir, wasn't he the one that lost his great love to an upstart God who wanted his affection?" Foyet asked.

"I slaughtered that God and did my level best to remove his name from history. There are a few traces of the name, but mostly it's just what he did that remains. So, Georgie, you have two options. You can submit and go to jail for your crimes and never get out."

"Or?"

"Or I'm going to kill you right here."

"No, you aren't." Foyet didn't look convinced, but Aaron knew that Reid was right. He was going to kill Foyet. "You might be able to lie to get into the FBI, and no one realizes it, but I can tell you are lying right now."

"I never told the FBI what I was the God of. I've never told anyone what I am the God of unless someone else was saying it first. Jason Gideon approached me after he had already gotten everything from Caltech. The FBI forms just have a box for God not what one is the God of. Assumptions on the part of people are not my problem, nor is correcting them. So Georgie, what do you choose? Life in prison or death?"

Foyet raised the gun he had, and Aaron watched as his finger on the trigger started to pull, but the sound of a gunshot shocked Aaron. The blood though that came out of the spot on Foyet's head where the bullet from Reid's gun had lodged itself in Foyet's head.

Aaron didn't even lower his gun as Foyet's body fell to the floor. He just stared at where the man had been, alive just seconds before.

"Hotch, look at me Hotch."

Aaron pulled back and looked at Reid. Reid's eyes were the same, but now Aaron could see what he hadn't noticed before. There was so much in those eyes, Aaron had thought it was him being a God but it wasn't. He was one of the oldest Gods that was known to be alive. Mimir. Aaron thought about Apollo and every other thing that had happened over the years that had made him question what he thought about Reid. He'd pushed it off, and now it was all coming back to him.

"What am I?" Aaron asked.

"What?" Reid looked shocked at the question.

Aaron set his gun down before he took Reid's from his unresisting hands. Reid was looking at him confused.

"You've played stupid for the last time with me, Reid, or whatever you call yourself. Given how smart you are you have to know what I am."

"You are a God."

"Reid," Aaron said. Reid tried to turn away, so Aaron grabbed him by his throat and shoved him into the wall that was behind them. Reid didn't fight him at all. Reid didn't even look scared. Aaron wondered if he had ever been scared of anything. If everything that he had done over the years that Aaron had known him were a lie. If the sexual relationship that had started that made Aaron fall in love with him had been a lie as well. Was Reid just bored?

"We need to call in the team, Hotch. We can handle everything else after. I promise you that I won't
dodge you, but we need to call now."

"Fine." Aaron released Reid's throat and picked up his phone. Since Foyet's case had been handed over to the fugitive retrieval squad, Aaron called Strauss so that she could deal with that part of it.

It didn't take long for the apartment to be full with the CSU team and Strauss. Reid was sitting down in the chair that was his favorite where Morgan was taking his statement. Aaron had already given his to Dave. There was no question of what had happened. Foyet had been Aaron's apartment with a gun. Foyet had been about to pull the trigger on Reid, but Reid fired first. There was no denying that. It was the part where Reid had been saying that Foyet wasn't going to leave there alive unless he was in chains. Foyet hadn't believed him.

Aaron watched Reid with his new eyes. Reid had shot Frank Breitkopf in cold blood. Aaron hadn't even had a second about what Reid had told him that had happened. No one had questioned it. Even Morgan hadn't questioned it, and Morgan would have been the first to question it. Aaron couldn't stop going over everything that had happened over the years.

JJ arrived last with Henry in her arms, the baby was still asleep, and as soon as she entered, Reid was right there taking the baby from her. JJ gladly handed him over. Will had been working nothing but nights for a few weeks after another detective had been injured after a chase across the DC streets after a gang member. Reid took a seat in his chair again with Henry on his chest.

"Did he really show up here?" JJ asked. Foyet's body was covered up in the living room area. "With Reid in the apartment above?"

"Food?" a voice called out. Jin was standing in the doorway, making sure to not come across the police tape. "When anyone gets hungry, come down. Fresh hot food all night long."

"Who is that?" Strauss asked.

"The proprietor that owns the building. He runs the restaurant, and he means that. Anyone get hungry or even thirsty head on down," Reid said, not looking up from where he was looking at Henry.

"Oh. Agent Hotchner, we have a case that's come across our radar. It's in McLean."

"I'm sorry, Chief Strauss but the team is coming off of a horrid case. With this none of us have got any sleep. Another team is going to have to take it."

"There is no other team," Strauss said. She looked around at the team. "Your team looks fine, and your team will take the case."

"No, they will not. We will not take the case because I will not endanger my team by having them chase after another UnSub after we went after one of the worst and then myself and another team member were part of a shootout in my own apartment. If you want to write me up, you can, but I will not let you hurt my team over this."

Strauss glared at Aaron, but she didn't say anything before she turned and left. Aaron knew that he would be expecting a phone call in the morning from probably Strauss herself telling him how much trouble he was in. Aaron didn't care though. The team wouldn't work at their best and being worn out before a case meant mistakes, and when mistakes were made, the team looked bad, and that made the FBI look bad. It would also make LEOs not reach out to the team.

"I'll handle that if something comes up," Dave offered.
"I can handle her just fine. I will not compromise the investigation or the team. We need sleep."

"We?" Morgan asked with a nod towards Reid.

"You can leave Henry with me," Reid said as he laid a blanket over Henry's head. He looked at JJ with a smile on his face. "That way you can get some sleep. Will can pick him up on his way home. Or later you both can once you both get some sleep."

"You need to rest too."

"I will, but I rest by reading. I can read with Henry on my chest." Reid looked very happy to have the baby in his arms.

"He did that with Jack when he had the croup," Aaron said. Reid grinned at Aaron, but the grin didn't go to his eyes. He looked scared. Finally and truly scared. Aaron knew that he wouldn't be allowed to sleep in his apartment that night. It was an open crime scene.

"You can stay at mine," Dave offered.

"Jessica will be bringing Jack home early. I'll stay at Reid's, so Jessica doesn't have to go out of her way." Aaron knew that Jessica said she would bring Jack back in the morning depending on his case.

"Agent Hotchner, we've obtained prints from your bedroom. As long as I see what you take, you can grab clothes that are in your dresser. No prints on it."

"I have a go bag in my car. I'll live out of it for now."

"You've not picked up the clothes from the dryer cleaners either, so you'll have plenty of suits."

"That's true."

"We are good to go," Dave said. He looked around at the team. "Let's get some sleep."

"Are you sure Reid?" JJ asked.

"Yes. Love to actually. Just need his diaper bag."

JJ looked at Aaron, and he nodded. Aaron knew that the team didn't realize that Reid had been the main one to handle most of the late nights with Jack after Aaron had thrown Haley out. He could understand why JJ was hesitant.

The team wandered out slowly. Morgan hung back even after Dave left.

"Are you sure you are okay Reid?"

"Yes. I'm fine. Really. I'm still more upset about Canada. That many and no one noticed. It was a civilian. That's two cases of homeless being targets without anyone has noticed. I know homeless are transient but someone had to notice, and they didn't care. I wonder how many killers that we chase started with homeless and moved on, but the bodies were never found."

"Let's not think about that tonight, huh Reid? You enjoy having Henry and thanks for letting Hotch crash at your place."

"I have the pack and play that I bought for Jack when he was a baby still. I can set it up in my bedroom for Henry and Hotch is welcome to crash whenever he wants. The second bed is made up
for him all the time. Especially since Jack is at sleepover age. He likes sleeping over with his father in my apartment because it's not home and he likes my pancakes better."

"He likes all of your cooking better," Aaron said, a familiar tease between them. Morgan looked at Reid before he turned to look at Aaron again. Aaron wondered what he was seeing until Morgan's eyes widened like he was seeing what no one else had except for Foyet.

"Don't have to worry about you being alone do I?" Morgan asked as he stepped over to Aaron. His voice was low enough to where the CSU wouldn't hear him.

"Don't," Aaron started, but he stopped.

"Hey, you and him have been connected. You made him human, and he made you a better Unit Chief. I don't have any hangups on it, even before you became a God which I know the team hasn't talked a lot about. We had that meal, but I think that maybe we should do a meal here. Just the team and do some talking when this has calmed down, and whatever is going to happen from Strauss happens."

"Sure. Here or Reid's. Or Reid's roof garden."


Reid said nothing as Morgan turned to leave.

"Let's go down to your room. I'll leave my key with the CSU team and tell them where to find me."

Reid nodded and stood up, grabbing the diaper bag that JJ had left. Aaron watched him leave before he moved to find the head of the CSU team. Aaron knew that for the sake of profiling, Strauss had told them to bag everything. Aaron was kind of glad that nothing had happened at his place that could be found through DNA evidence. Aaron wanted to fight, or he wanted to fuck, he wasn't sure. Aaron wondered if that was why Reid offered to take Henry so that Aaron couldn't do either.

Aaron took his time leaving and walking up to Reid's apartment. The door was open, but Aaron shut, locked, and set the alarm after he entered. He found Reid standing in the doorway to his bedroom, looking at a sleeping Henry. Aaron walked up until he was several feet behind him.

"You can ask me anything, and I won't lie to you. I might tell you to go fuck yourself, but I won't lie to you."

"Who was it that Foyet was talking about?"

"My great lost love? He's been dead a long time. I grieved for him a long time ago."

"Who was he?"

"What do you mean?"

"What was his name?"

"You have no reason to be jealous, Hotch."

"You can't even call me Aaron."

"You've never called me Spencer."
"Kind of good ain't it, given that it's not your name. What happened to Spencer Reid?" The name debate could happen later. Reid was still looking at Henry.

"I was in Vegas, checking on Reid. He was a bright boy who loved to learn. I checked in on him every year. I was there in Vegas when the assassins hit, but Reid wasn't close enough to Godness for him to survive the wreck. I took advantage though of the confusion of a seven-car pileup to get Reid's body out, and I used reserves to make myself look younger for a while. I would age up some every little bit until I hit what I looked like."

"What should I call you?" Aaron asked.

"I've grown partial to the name Spencer Reid, and it's not like you can't prove that I'm not him. DNA doesn't lie but DNA changes when one becomes a God and Spencer Reid's DNA never had a chance to change. You'd never prove it. I never lied on my intake paperwork for the FBI. I made sure of that. I've done this before, long before anything was tracked. Never had to not fake a death though. If you want though, I'll leave. I can find a million reasons to leave."

"You've offered that before. Back when Morgan was still giving you problems. Why?"

"That's a long and convoluted answer."

"Right now I have nothing but time. Let's go and sit down."

Aaron reached out and grabbed Reid's shoulder, turning him around to face him. Reid's face was unreadable, but Aaron still reached out and touched his face. Reid closed his eyes and leaned into the touch. Aaron took another step closer, bringing their mouths together in a simple kiss. Reid didn't stop him; instead, Reid gave everything to that kiss. Aaron could feel tears coming down Reid's face.

"Don't cry, Ir, don't cry," Aaron said as he brushed his lips over Reid's cheek. Aaron didn't realize what he had said until he heard Reid gasp. Aaron looked at Reid and saw him looking at Aaron like Aaron had grown another head. Aaron felt Reid's heart racing at his pulse point where Aaron was cupping his cheeks. Reid tried to pull away, but Aaron tightened his hands so that he couldn't. "What is this?"

"You asked about the God-lover that I had before."

"Yes. You didn't say anything about him." Aaron didn't know what to think about Reid being upset over a nickname.

"He was killed, and it took a long time to recover."

"I've read some of the journals that you published. Bits and pieces here and there."

"I cut him out of the journals, and the oldest are long after his death."

"Why?"

"Because it hurts to talk about him, even now." Reid looked at Aaron pleadingly. "Can we go so that we don't wake up Henry?"

"Yes." Aaron let go of Reid's cheeks, but he didn't let Reid leave him. He wrapped his arm around Reid's shoulder. Aaron was afraid that if he let him, Reid was going to pull away. There was a lot more going on than Aaron thought there was. Aaron directed them towards Reid's reading chair. Aaron snagged a hold of Reid's hand, and as Aaron sat down, he pulled Reid onto his lap. "Why did you join the BAU?"
"I was bored at Caltech, and then there was Gideon. It had been two decades since I had even thought about the BAU, or BSU at the time. I had met Max Ryan right after he and Gideon, and Rossi started the unit. I was intrigued by the unit as it was seeming to be and posing as the God of Psychology, it fit for me to join. I didn't expect Gideon to just throw me into the unit like he did after I got out of the Academy. I didn't like it, but I was already there. Everyone on the team, even you, hated me." Reid sighed and looked up at Aaron. He reached out and touched Aaron's forehead before trailing his fingers down Aaron's temple and then his cheek. He gripped Aaron's chin and tilted his face up.

"I love you," Aaron said because he couldn't think of anything else to say.

"I know. I've known for a while. I tried to stay apart, but you were lost after Gideon was gone and I felt bad for you. Then Haley and I couldn't stay away. I didn't want to care as much as I did. You made me care for you, for Jack, and then the rest of the team followed." Reid leaned in and kissed Aaron. Aaron could feel all of the emotion in Reid's kiss that he had been holding back. Aaron's heart almost broke at the feeling of loneliness that was coming off of him. Aaron wrapped his arms around Reid's waist, pulling him close. Aaron pulled out of the kiss and stared at Reid. "I fell in love with you the first time that you fell asleep on me in bed trying to take all of my warmth."

"I don't remember the time I fell in love with you. I don't remember a time when I wasn't right now. Even before Vegas."

Reid sighed and near slumped in Aaron's lap. "I do know what you are the God of, Aaron."

"Okay."

"Old Gods are usually the Gods of several things. I was pretty simple, but since knowledge is pretty big, I was glad I didn't have a lot of things to be a God of."

"And?" Aaron asked.

"My God, he was a God of three things. He wasn't a God of War or Battles, or anything big but he was there when humans needed them. He didn't have ballads and songs wrote about him but he was mine, and I was his. Another God wanted my attention and set up his death. It didn't take long for me to find that God and gut him. He was the only God that I have ever killed for personal reasons."

"What was he the God of? Your God?" Aaron asked because he was pretty sure that it was leading to what he was the God of.

"Gods feel different. To an Old God like me, I know the feeling of every God I've come across. No one can hide. I would never be able to fool another Old God or a New God I have met before but we all love our little games, and that's why Apollo and the others never gave up my secrets. I've never felt two Gods feel the same. The night that you became a God when I was shot, I was grey not because of what happened but because of what I felt. My God, My Ar, was the God of Fidelity, Bravery, and Integrity. I fell in love you before that night but dammit if I wasn't gutted that night. There you were. Ar had finally come back to me, and it was you. Apollo had to know who you were and he thankfully kept his mouth shut about it."

"You are serious?" Aaron asked.

"You feel exactly the same, and I hate it because it makes me want things from you that you aren't ready for. Things I am not ready for."

"Like what?" Aaron asked, leaning in to nip at Reid's neck.
"Like living together and never being apart. Like he and I used to be."

"We were like that before I became a God. We live close enough to be living together. Jack likes to be with you. We just have to get the sex thing outside of cases," Aaron said into Reid's ear. "What do you want me to call you?"

"I like Spencer. You've whispered it into my skin when you think I'm lost in pleasure. I like it when you say it."

"You said his name was Ar?"

"Yeah."

"I called you Ir earlier. I don't know why or where it came from." Aaron exhaled hotly over Spencer's ear. "Did he call you that?"

"Yes." Spencer settled his hands on Aaron's shoulders using his thumbs to lift up his head to look at him. "I want you, Aaron."

"Your bedroom is off limits because I am not having sex with a baby in the room."

"I have a guest room, and there is lube in there." Spencer leaned in, almost kissing Aaron and just breathing over Aaron's lips. Aaron didn't know if he wanted to lean in and close the distance or wait for Spencer to give in and kiss him first. "I want you to do filthy things to me, and if you won't do it in my bedroom, we can do it in the guest room."

"Or we can move Henry out. I know you still have those baby monitors. I've seen you pull them out when Jack naps and you are cleaning."

"I saw you lock up. So I'll take care of Henry, and you can get naked."

"I'm not getting naked until you have Henry out of the bedroom."

"Prude," Spencer said with a laugh. He pushed himself off of Aaron's lap and sauntered toward the bedroom. Aaron watched him until he saw Spencer leaving with the pack and play. Aaron stood up when Spencer disappeared from the living room and into the guest room. Aaron worked out of his clothes as he crossed the room, leaving them wherever he dropped them. Aaron knew that it would rile Spencer up. He didn't know what he wanted, but Spencer had said filthy things.

Spencer's eyes were full of emotion when he entered the room with the baby monitor in hand. He huffed at Aaron as he crossed the room to set the monitor down on the nightstand.

"You left a mess in my living room and my bedroom," Spencer huffed.

"I did." Aaron grinned at him.

"I should make you go without," Spencer said as he climbed up onto the bed and straddled Aaron's waist. Aaron's hands went right for Spencer's covered hips. Aaron wanted to rip the clothes off of him, but he refrained. Spencer liked his clothes and the pout that he would wear if Aaron damaged them would kill his erection. Aaron instead moved his hand to cup Spencer's cock through his pants.

"This right here tells me that you won't. Why did you climb up here with your clothes on if you want me to do dirty things to you?" Aaron asked.

"I thought you liked undressing me but if you don't..." Spencer trailed off and started to scoot down
the bad, away from Aaron. Aaron reached out and grabbed the back of Spencer's head, but he didn't pull him back. He pulled down. Spencer didn't even wait for Aaron to say a single thing, he licked at the head of Aaron's cock before taking him all the way down. Aaron hissed, and his fingers tightened in Spencer's hair, holding him in place. Spencer did fight out of the hold but adjusted his mouth some before swallowing around Aaron's cock.

"Fuck, I always forget how much you like this," Aaron said. Sometimes that's all sex was between them, Spencer getting on his knees in the shower and sucking Aaron off before jerking himself off. Aaron realized that it was the cuddling in bed part that Spencer wanted more. Spencer would read all night long. "Up, up,"

Spencer pulled off of Aaron's cock and looked up at him, but he didn't move up until Aaron tugged on his head. Spencer moved up willingly and straddled Aaron's waist again. Aaron started to work on Spencer's vest before he got tired of buttons. A shirt Aaron could replace easy, he grabbed the bottom edges of the shirt after untucking it and ripped it open.

"You are buying me a new one, Aaron."

"I'll buy you ten new shirts," Aaron said as he leaned up to take a nipple in his mouth. Aaron heard the squeak of the bed that said that Spencer had grabbed it to brace himself. Aaron wrapped one arm around Spencer to hold him close to the God before he worked the other between them. Spencer moaned as Aaron opened Spencer's pants and pulled out his cock, finding that his lover had not put on underwear that morning. Aaron rubbed his thumb over the head of Spencer's cock, feeling how hard he was, Aaron knew that it wouldn't be long before he came, which was what Aaron wanted. Aaron switched to Spencer's other nipple, lavishing it with attention as he felt Spencer's cock start to swell in his hand. He bit down on the nipple, just hard enough to make Spencer almost scream. The sound was muffled, but Aaron didn't care, he got what he wanted which was Spencer coming first for once.

"Aaron," Spencer whined as he tried to shove up to get away from Aaron's hold, but Aaron held onto him tightly.

"Now that you are all pliant lay down on your belly." Aaron let go of Spencer then, and he watched as Spencer did what he wanted just facing the other end of the bed, a pillow under his hips. Aaron grabbed the bottle of lube from the drawer and laid it on the small of Spencer's back. Aaron cupped his fingers and collected the release that was splattered all over his chest. Spencer utterly relaxed on the bed. He wasn't moving other than to breathe. Aaron had never used ejaculate as a lube before, but the idea was intriguing, and Spencer would tell him no if he didn't want it.

Aaron spread Spencer's cheeks one-handed and smeared the fluid over Spencer's hole as much as he could. In the months since the friendship had turned sexual, Aaron had learned what Spencer liked and what Aaron himself liked and tried on Spencer from playing with his hole in the shower. Aaron used two fingers right off the bat, getting them wet and then pushing them into Spencer. Spencer was relaxed, and his hole didn't fight Aaron at all. Aaron stayed straddling his waist, debating not even letting Spencer spread his legs.

"Fuck me," Spencer begged after a few minutes of Aaron playing with his hole. Aaron knew that Spencer wasn't above turning and manhandling Aaron into doing what he wanted. Aaron used what release was left to coat his cock. He set the lube aside for the moment. He would feel if they needed it or Spencer would tell him. Aaron used his fingers again to spread Spencer's cheeks so that he could use his other hand to hold his cock steady as he breached his lover. Aaron groaned at how tight Spencer felt with his legs pressed together.

Aaron fucked into Spencer hard and fast a few times, enjoying the feel before he settled into a
deeper, slower pace. When he was sure that he liked what he was doing, Aaron stopped bracing himself on the bed and instead draped himself over Spencer body. He braced himself on his elbows with his lips right at Spencer's ear. He reached out, and Spencer willingly tangled their fingers together.

"Do you like this?" Aaron asked.

Spencer nodded his head, rubbing his face on the bed sheets.

"You are mine now right?" Aaron asked.

"Yes," Spencer gasped.

"No one else can have you anymore. Not Dev. Not Scarlett. Or any other Gods who have had you before." Aaron started to thrust a little harder into Spencer. Aaron groaned as he felt his orgasm approaching. "You. Are. Mine."

"Yours, Ar, yours," Spencer promised. He buried his face into the bed and made a sound that Aaron couldn't understand before he lifted his head again. "Always. Forever."

Aaron buried his face into Spencer's sweaty neck as he came from Spencer's words. He felt the flutter of the muscles around his cock that told him that Spencer was coming as well. He slumped down to where he was sure that he was causing Spencer to have problems breathing, but he didn't care. He was too worn out to move. Spencer pushed up after a few minutes, tipping them both onto their sides.

"You'll have to teach me about us, Spencer. I know that I am not him, not really but I want to know what caused you such pain and why you hated that God so much. Also, you'll be buying your own damned shirt because you can't tell me that you can't afford it. Being alive as long as you have, you have to have a huge nest egg."

"I own a lot of stock and play the markets well, but yes, I have money. I actually feel like I could go to sleep."

"I always feel like that after a case but it never comes I just relax in bed. So tell me, am I a reincarnation of your Ar?" Aaron wrapped his arm around Spencer and slipped the other under Spencer's head, wrapping him up of sorts.

"No, you look nothing like him. He was blonde haired and short, couldn't put on muscles to save his life, but your attitudes are very close. I think it's why I couldn't keep the distance that I wanted. You wormed your way into me, and I couldn't escape."

"I'm not upset about that. So I'm a New God of many things?" Aaron tried to think if there were any other New Gods that he had heard of that were like that, but nothing was popping.

"No, Aaron. You are the New God of the FBI. Fidelity, bravery, integrity. You scream G-Man, and I can see you sitting on the Director's chair one day when we finally tire of being inside of the BAU. Or you can go up, and I can stay in the BAU. I love what we do, and maybe at some point, I'll come out as Mimir to everyone but you. Right now, I want to stay as Spencer Reid, God of Psychology. I might come out to the team after a while. I'm sure that Morgan will have an issue with that, but I don't care."

"We will make sure that he's not so upset that he goes crying to the bosses. We can manage it easily. I don't want you to not be in the BAU."
"They can't fire me, Aaron. I never lied on my intake paperwork, and it's their own damned fault they never actually asked what I was the God of."

Aaron hummed and smiled into Spencer's neck. He could see that fight happening, and he really hoped that he was a part of it. Watching Spencer take them all apart with his words was arousing mentally, and he was sure that it would be physically as well. They just had to get through whatever Strauss had coming to Aaron after his display over the case in front of others. Aaron wasn't that worried if Spencer was right and Aaron was pretty sure that he was. No one was going to make him leave the FBI.
From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

There was a time when Gods were feared and respected. What we said went. No one questioned us, but as times have changed and humans have learned that they created us, they feel like they are superior to us. If they were superior like they thought, they wouldn't have needed to make us. Humans who feel the need to elevate themselves over the ones that they are supposed to be in charge of make me sick.

No human is better than any other. Especially not to the Gods that they have created. They are all ants compared to us.

It's always nice to remind those kinds of Humans that they are ants. It was always nice to smell the fear on them as they are reminded that it would take little for one of us to kill them.

May 2009

Aaron heard the sound of laughing, and he reached out his hand and found that Spencer was not in bed with him. Aaron felt like he had not slept at all which he knew was because he didn't need sleep, but sometimes his body still gave into it. Spencer had told him that it would take a long while for him to get like Spencer and not need any sleep at all and just kind of laying and resting would recharge him. Aaron felt like he needed to get up and move, but the sound of Jack and Henry both laughing in the other room was kind of nice.

"So the great brave Ar rushed forward and battled with the creatures who came up out of the earth to try and steal Mimir away from him," Spencer said. There was the sound of the oven door opening and then shutting again. Water running as next.

"What happened to Ar?" Jack asked.

"Ar freed Mimir from the bindings that were holding him, and they continued on into the castle that was holding what Mimir wanted. Mimir wasn't that hurt, so Ar gave him a weapon, a sword, and he used it to help defeat the creatures that kept on coming to stop them. Finally, they were inside of the castle, and Mimir used his knowledge to get them through the traps and dead ends that tried to stop them. Finally, on the other side of the castle, they exited into a huge forest, and there was the fearsome dragon."

Henry and Jack gasped, though Henry’s was more in reaction to Spencer’s words than anything else. Henry started to giggle, and there was the sound of something hitting the floor.

"Well, I guess you are still thirsty, huh?" Spencer asked.

"Ya," Henry said, and he giggled again. Spencer moved around the room making noises that Aaron was unable to figure out. Then there was the sound of pouring. Spencer was moving back over toward the monitor.

"Oh, when did this get turned on," Spencer said, and Aaron was worried that Spencer was going to shut it off. There was a click, but it was not the monitor. "Do you have wandering fingers Jack?"

Aaron closed his eyes at the tone that Spencer was using. It was the same damned tone that Spencer
always had with Jack but not, there was something that Aaron was able to name it with. Parental, loving, and a whole bunch of other words that Aaron just never put with Spencer's interactions with Jack. Aaron knew that Spencer liked Jack, but he had never known if it was more than just Spencer tolerating him because he wanted his friendship with Aaron. Now Aaron knew different. He wasn't sure that he had ever heard of God with children. He knew that the whole becoming a God made one sterile. Aaron had never needed to know that information before. He knew it though because of his job in the BAU. It had been a blessing when the news was spread far and wide.

"Who won?" Jack asked.

"Ar and Mimir did of course. The Dragon was hoarding that which Mimir wanted, and while Ar wasn't the best fighter, he would do anything that Mimir wanted. Which Mimir knew when he went to the castle alone. He knew that Ar would follow and he knew that he would be saved."

"Did they kill the Dragon?"

"No." Spencer moved closer to the monitor and then there was the sound of Jack being picked up. Henry made a noise and Aaron could just see the pout that was on his face right then.

"Hap?" Henry asked.

"Well, Mister Henry," Spencer said, and Aaron heard the slight scrape of the high chair that hadn't been used since Jack moved on the floor. "The Dragon was a pet of sorts."

"Really?" Jack asked.

"Oh yes. A little girl had been taken from her home and put there. The creatures were meant to make sure that no one could get to her, but she made the Dragon to protect her from them. The little girl was hiding in the forest trying to figure out how to escape when Mimir found her while Ar distracted the dragon. He had a secret weapon with him. Mimir walked to the little girl and held up her favorite wooden toy. Her parents had given it to him so that when he rescued her, he could make sure that she knew that he was a good person. As soon as the Dragon realized that she was safe with them, he shrunk down to where he could ride on her neck. That was how they rode home on horses, with Ar holding the little girl in his lap and the dragon perched on Mimir's neck. The little girl grew up into a beautiful woman who never forgot who rescued her. Ar and Mimir visited her often over the years until she died and then they kept on visiting her family."

Aaron heard a yawn and looked at the time. It was late in the morning, and he really hoped that was Henry who was yawning and not Jack because if Jack had a nap then, he was going to be a bear that night when it was time for bed because he was going to be overly tired, but the boy always refused to go to be early. Jack liked to sleep on Spencer still, primarily when he was sick, and just the act of him laying on Spencer's chest would make the boy sleepy, so he refused to lay on Spencer if it was anywhere near bedtime. It had been comical at the beginning when Aaron had realized it, but sometimes Aaron wished the boy wasn't as stubborn as Aaron. Aaron knew that it was his own fault, whatever genes he had that controlled that as the one that gave it to Jack but why couldn't he just have got his hair color?

"Daddy?" Jack called out, and it took Aaron a few seconds to realize that he did not hear it on the monitor and instead it was in person. He opened his eyes and looked over the side of the bed. Jack was standing in the doorway, Aaron had not even heard it open. Spencer wasn't anywhere to be seen.

Aaron reached out and patted the bed where Spencer had been the night before. Jack rushed forward and scrambled up onto the bed. Only Aaron keeping a hold of the blankets stopped Jack from pulling...
them off of him and tumbling both the boy and the blankets down to the bed.

"Pen told story about a dragon!"

"I heard that, Jack. Is Pen a good storyteller?" Aaron asked as Jack wiggled under the blankets and cuddled into Aaron's chest. Aaron was glad that he was not fully naked under the blankets. He had slipped on a pair of sleep pants before going to bed. Jack closed his eyes, but he was grinning so Aaron knew that he wasn't trying to fall asleep.

"He is. He's putting Henry down for a nap. Miss JJ called and told him that he usually takes two naps during the day and one is right around now." Jack got close to Aaron even though they were already pressed together.

Aaron frowned and checked his forehead, he felt a little warm, and it was not from being under the blanket. Jack had been around a few new people over the past week from down in the restaurant, so Aaron wasn't shocked that he seemed to have caught something. Aaron laid his hand on Jack's back and rubbed at it a little. Jack sighed in happiness. Aaron was going to miss it when Jack didn't like the touching that Aaron gave him anymore.

"Hey," Spencer said as he stopped in the doorway to lean against it. Aaron looked up at him and smiled. There was a very apprehensive look on Spencer's face as he stared at Aaron and it took a few seconds for Aaron to realize that he was unsure of what Aaron's mind was on everything that happened the day before.

Aaron thought back to the sex, had not during a case and his body started to warm at the thought of it. Aaron smiled at Spencer. "I love you."

Spencer swallowed and nodded his head. Aaron knew that things had got emotional the night before and that Spencer might need time to process it all, but the fact that Spencer was still here was all that Aaron needed to know to know that Spencer was going to stay.

"CSU left notes with Petal last night about how he went through everything, but there were no prints that led up here. After allowing us to come here, they thought that he might have been watching enough to see that you spent a lot of time here, but there were no prints on my outside door nor the roof to the building. None of my friends on the roof said that he ventured up there either."

Aaron nodded and looked down at Jack.

"Jessica dropped him off about an hour and a half ago. He's running a slight temperature, and while she was more than willing to keep him, she didn't want to force him to stay with her when he wanted to be with us, so she brought him and Ri home. Ri has not shown herself to Jessica yet."

"Jessica is still a little leery on the fact that you are a God. I've not disclosed that I am one as well to her." It wasn't that Aaron didn't want her to know he was just afraid that too much at once would upset her and Jack would pay the price for that.

"Hungry," Jack said, and he pulled away from Aaron. Jack rolled onto his back and looked at Spencer holding his hands out. Spencer walked over to the bed and picked him up and bounced him a little. Jack wrapped his arms around Spencer's neck and clung to him. Aaron frowned, but Spencer shook his head. Aaron relaxed back onto the bed.

"Well, as soon as your father gets up and gets dressed we can eat breakfast. It should be about done, I put the cheese on top to get it melted."

"What did you make?"
"Muffin cup egg casseroles. There is cheese in them, but they are better with just a little on top as well. Jack helped me mix up yours."

"Mine? They aren't all the same?"

"No. Henry's is just eggs with cheese as JJ, and Will have not added in the other things into his diet yet, meaning veg in his eggs. Will keeps a list of food in the diaper bag that Henry has tried and his feelings on all of them. He loves eating eggs with everyone in the morning it seems. Especially scrambled ones that are allowed to cool and him to pick up and eat. So I'll break his egg up into bite-size chunks and put them on the high chair while we eat. I also have a fruit salad that's in the fridge."

"You went to the market didn't you?"

"Yes. Jessica stayed with Jack and Henry while I did. I trust Ri with Jack for runs like that, but Henry didn't have anyone to watch him, and Jessica gladly did when she realized that I needed to get a few things for breakfast."

"What about meat?" Aaron asked, and his stomach turned a little at the thought of pork products. Aaron really loved bacon, and he would one day eat it again, but he wasn't that keen on it at the moment. Aaron sat up on the bed while he waited for Spencer's answer, but Spencer didn't answer him, so Aaron looked up. Spencer was frowning at something. He looked at his watch and then turned to walk out of the room with Jack in his arms. Aaron frowned until he heard the knock on the door. That was something that Aaron knew. It was a police knock, hard to miss and that was on purpose. Aaron got up and shut the bedroom door so that he could get dressed. He chose a pair of dark jeans that were in Spencer's closet and a dressier polo that he hadn't remembered leaving at Spencer's.

There was actually little of Aaron's clothes and things at Spencer's mainly because they were so close, Aaron just usually went up to his apartment to do his morning ritual if he stayed the night. It wasn't like they had sex at Spencer's before. Aaron was walking out of the bedroom when Spencer opened the door. It was Strauss along with three other men that Aaron knew well. John Richmond was the highest ranking person in there. Steven Calder and Anthony Delacroix were right below him but still much higher than Aaron or even Strauss.

"Sirs, Ma'am," Spencer said, and he nodded his head at them in greeting instead of offering a hand as his arms were still full of Jack.

"Hotch, how are you?" Richmond asked.

"I'm doing as well as I can be after a killer made it into my apartment and had plans to kill me."

"We read over the reports that Agents Rossi and Morgan took from you and from God Reid," Delacroix said. He waved toward the couch in the living room, and Aaron knew that they were there to talk.

Aaron looked at Strauss to see that she was smirking. Aaron looked at Spencer next who was looking at Strauss with what could only be called a pout on his face. Spencer walked into the kitchen and made a few noises that told Aaron he was taking breakfast out of the oven. Aaron hoped that they held well at re-heating.

"Is there somewhere else your nanny can go and where is God Reid?" Calder asked as he sat down in one of the three chairs. Strauss took the one that Spencer usually sat in, and Delacroix took the last. Aaron was okay with that. He walked over to Spencer and took Jack who started to sniffle a little. He was staring at the four new people.
"I'll put Jack down in Henry's pack and play with a few toys," Aaron said to Spencer.

"You can put him on my bed, Hotch. There are a few toys in there already." Spencer turned to look at Calder, and he laughed. "I would have assumed that someone in your position would know exactly who they were coming to talk. You do realize that this is my apartment, Sir?"

Aaron had never heard someone talk like that to Calder. He turned to try and settle the situation, but Richmond pushed Spencer down onto the love seat. Richmond was the ADD for the particular unit that dealt with the Gods that were in the FBI. So he oversaw all of them.

"Calder, before you put your foot into it again. I would like to introduce you to Doctor Spencer Reid. He's very adept at child wrangling, and Hotch's son has become attached to him. There is a reason that when Hotch divorced, he moved here. This building had three Gods in it."

"Had?" Strauss asked.

"Yes, it has four now. Now, for pure transparency-" Richmond stopped as Aaron fully entered the bedroom and settled Jack down onto the bed and grabbed the basket of toys in the corner. He just shrugged and dumped them on to the bed.

"Jack, I'm going to shut the door, but you can come out if you need," Aaron kissed his son's forehead before whispering in his ear. "Or send Ri to get one of us."

"'Kay, Daddy. Pen left the monitor in the kitchen."

Aaron laughed and ruffled his son's hair before he walked out of the room to grab the monitor from the kitchen. He made sure that the one in the bedroom was off before leaving. He looked in on Henry before going back to the living room. Aaron handed the monitor to Spencer before he sat down on the love seat with him.

"So I can assume that since it's not the normal crew that looks into home shootings for officers, that this either has to do with the fact that someone thinks that the shooting of Foyet was not valid or that Unit Chief Strauss is still upset with the fact that I refused a case after my team has gone to hell and back over the past few days."

"You would be correct," Richmond said. He looked at Strauss and frowned. Calder and Delacroix looked smug.

Calder and Delacroix were two men who disliked Aaron because of the kind of hard things that he did to make sure that his team and really all of the BAU had what they needed.

"The International Response team has ended up taking it as a favor. Garrett was only too pleased to do it," Richmond said.

"You cannot refuse a case based on a case going bad," Calder said.

"Bad?" Spencer asked. He looked at Calder and if looks could kill the man would be dead. He shot up of the love seat, and Aaron and Richmond both moved to intercept him, but instead of going toward Calder he walked over to where his computer was in the living room. He grabbed a folder. "Since the official reports have not been submitted by the team because we got in at such a late time we were supposed to go in and file them this afternoon. I have already worked up mine since I didn't sleep last night. I was going to watch Jack and Henry while the rest of the team went in."

Spencer handed the folder over to Calder before he sat down again. "That is my case summary as well as full report. If you would at least read the summary, you can understand why this team does
not have the mental capacity to work another case. There is a reason that downtime is forced on
teams after certain cases. There was no winner in this case, not even the BAU. Two men lost their
lives that should not have. While one did kill a man, I cannot fault him for it. The other did not have
the mental capacity to have the morals that most humans have or the true understanding of what he
did. He was protecting the only person that he had in the world. Because his brother painted him a
violent man when he was really a teddy bear, and the other officers on this case followed what he
said because he was misunderstood and what do humans do to things they don't understand? They
kill them."

Aaron pressed Spencer to sit back on the love seat, and they waited for Calder to read through the
report before he handed it to Delacroix as well. Richmond waved it off when Delacroix was done, so
Strauss was given it last.

"Why did you refuse to read it?" Calder asked Richmond.

"Because I have seen this team and other BAU teams turn around after a week-long case and work
another before going home. I have seen them process the last case and before the proverbial ink was
dry on the reports, they packed up and flew across the country again. Some have missed their
children's births, have had to find out their kid was sick from across the country where they could do
nothing about it. The only time that I have ever seen a team not take a case was when the Unit Chief
thought that they were emotionally or physically compromised. If the team went on this, they could
have missed something that could have seen more victims die and then we would have pulled them
in and told them that they should have refused the case or to even just sanction them for not being
good enough. Then there is the fact that two of their team members were nearly killed last night by a
fugitive from the law that we have not been able to track down. I did not like the thought that was
put forth by someone who is not here that Agent Hotchner invited Foyet into his apartment just to kill
him. There was a dead or alive order on Foyet. We have the report that he was all over that damned
apartment and that he spent a lot of time in there. Laid in wait. Would you have rather that Agent
Reid didn't fire to kill and Agent Hotchner was dead before Foyet?"

"Now see here," Calder starred, but Delacroix held up his hand.

"He's right. We have evidence that he was in that apartment for hours at least and before I left there
was a video being cleaned up of him entering the building on his own while Agents Hotchner and
Reid were still in the air. There is no one would can try and put this was anything other than a clean
kill. There is also this." Delacroix leaned over and pulled a folder out of his briefcase. Aaron hadn't
even noticed that the man had it. Aaron took the folder when it was offered to him. Inside was a
picture that Aaron knew well. It had been on the fridge of Aaron's apartment. It was of Jack and
Sheila at the park. Over Jack's face was the Eye of Providence.

"That's a threat," Spencer said as he picked up the picture in the evidence bag that it was in.

"That's what we took it as when it was collected by the evidence team," Richmond said. He sighed
and rubbed his hands over his face. "He had to be staying somewhere, and that means that someone
has seen him, so we are doing a canvas. We will find where he was staying. Someone has seen him."
Richmond looked very convinced that they were going to find whatever bolthole that Foyet had been
staying in. Aaron wasn't so sure, but he was willing to let them look.

"I think that we are done here," Delacroix said.

"We are here to talk about Agent Hotchner and his refusal to do his job." Strauss stood up, but no
one else did. "He makes reckless decisions."

"No, he actually makes the least amount of them," Calder said. He looked at Strauss with a frown on
his face. "His teams' reaction times would be compromised and could make disastrous decisions if confronted with an UnSub. He knows his team better than anyone, and he has never put his team at risk when he has any other choice. He has also acted with decorum when it comes to working with hostile LEOs that don't want him and his team there. We have not forgotten the report about the one case that you have gone into the field and humiliated a cop that had worked for longer than you have. I think that this would have been better handled internally before coming here."

Richmond looked at Calder like he was smart which wasn't a look that Aaron was expecting at all from the man.

"Section Chief Strauss, we have a few things to discuss with God Reid, and you are not needed for that," Richmond said.

"He's my subordinate, and I will not be removed," Strauss demanded.

"What does this pertain to?" Spencer asked.

"The new little new God you have been training," Richmond said, and his eyes didn't leave Spencer to even dart at Aaron at all.

"It's fine," Aaron said. He leaned back on the love seat and crossed his right leg over his left, resting the ankle on the knee. He laid one of his arms across the back of the cushion. "It's been pressed upon me recently that hiding is not going to do me any good.

"What is going on?" Strauss asked.

"During the case last month that Hotch's team worked a New God emerged, the New God requested that his status be kept from those that it did not need to be known by. As his team already had another New God on it, it wasn't that hard to make sure that the new one was taken care of and really Reid is one of the best Gods that we have on the payroll. I have less issue with him than any other though I think that is somewhat because of Agent Hotchner handling him well so that everything stayed internal on the team as much as possible. The BAU had never had a God in their ranks before and the adjustment period was a little slow but better than other units."

Richmond stood up from where he had taken a seat on the couch and walked over to where Aaron had set up a small drink area that was well out of the reach of Jack. He carefully poured drinks for everyone. Aaron watched as he poured a finger of a drink into three glasses. That drink wasn't going to do a damned thing to the third person in the room unless there was another God in the room. It was a harmless drink Gods but didn't do anything to Humans either, but it was favored by Gods when they were drinking with Humans as it at least looked like scotch. Aaron was developing a taste for it, though the fact that he could belt back scotch was nice. Dave was still very upset at that.

The drinks were passed out, and Richmond sat down with the same drink that Aaron and Spencer were given. He raised that glass to Aaron. "I have issues with substance abuse, and I got help for it, but I was afraid of becoming addicted to alcohol. This has no long term effects on Humans or Gods. One of the first Gods I ever worked with had me try it. I get the same feel, the burn that I like when I drink scotch but there is no risk of becoming dependent on it in any form. Your brand is much better than anything that I've got a hold of."

"The older the God who makes it, the better it is. They've refined it. The base recipe is standard, but I know people who do this for a living, Human spirits as well."

Aaron wondered if there was a still somewhere in the damned building as well as barrels. He would have to ask Spencer to give him a thorough tour of the place.
"So who is the New God that Reid has been teaching? I thought that all New Gods were young? So that leaves pretty much Agent Jareau."

"Actually, Chief Strauss it was me," Aaron said. He set his glass down on his knee that was balanced in the air and looked at her. He saw the play of emotions over her face and wasn't as good as Spencer at reading them. Aaron glanced at his lover and found that he was staring at Strauss with an extraordinary look on his face.

"Oh, wow. You really are insecure aren't you?" Spencer tossed back his drink before getting up and getting more. "You really don't see what's right in front of your damned face, do you? Hotch has never wanted your job. I think that him taking a desk job just might actually kill him. The only reason that I can think of that he would take the section Chief position is if you were not here and whoever else was being looked at for it might do more harm than good. Even then he would probably tag along on too many cases with various teams, and someone would find a Section Chief that he would allow."

"You are a New God?" Strauss asked.

"I am."

"Of what?" Strauss asked.

"STRAUSS!" Richmond said.

"What? It's relevant!"

"Actually it's not relevant at all. You are dismissed!"

Strauss paled, but she stood up and left without another word.

"She's not going to keep that quiet," Spencer said as he finally sat down again, but he did not sit down on the seat that he had been sitting down in. No, he sat on the arm of the couch. Aaron's arm of the couch. Aaron debated moving away but as he took in the way that the three men looked at him and Spencer. They all knew exactly what was going on.

"No, but I planned on that," Aaron said. He placed his hand on Spencer's knee to stop it from bouncing, a human trait that was very strange to see in Spencer, even after all of this time. Also

"She'll kill her career with accusations."

"You know Hotch," Calder said as he raised up on the couch a little and reached behind himself to do something. He came back out with his wallet in hand. Aaron got to watch him and Delacroix hand over a few bills to Richmond. "If you could have not started to fuck him, my wallet would have liked you better."

"What?" Aaron asked.

"I and a few other of the higher-ups have had a bet starting not long after you seemed to circle around Reid after everything that happened with your wife. A few of us thought that it would take long for you two to fall into bed. I could see it and hoped that it didn't happen, just to be contrary."

"And the fallout?"

"None, not on your end. The moment that you became a New God, we lost the control on being able to tell you who you could and couldn't have sex with. If you were having sex before that, we can't
do a damned thing about it either. We cannot pinpoint the moment that you became an almost God. When you did, you became a different person, different thoughts, different goals. You and he might face a few words, a few weird looks, but no one is gonna try and bring you up on the regulations that don't really exist and are really in name only because of David Rossi." Calder looked a little upset to be saying it but not really. Like he was playing a role, and Aaron wasn't sure that he liked that. He looked at Spencer to see that he was watching Calder intently. Aaron looked at Delacroix and then at Richmond.

"So exactly how long?"

"For a relationship?" Spencer asked. The three men nodded. "Last night. Before that it was just fucking after cases but before we got home. I'm not the greatest at wanting a relationship at all. Last night I realized that no matter what if Foyet had killed him, I would have been severely hurt and so why not get everything that I want out of that relationship. We already mostly live together. Between his apartment and mine, neither of us are alone that long."

"This building has been a thorn in the side of the FBI for a long time. People in the area were very...hesitant about a God and his wife moving in back when they did it in the sixties. Things calmed down it was mostly forgotten."

"Then Petal flayed a man alive for attempting to kill them," Spencer said.

Aaron looked at Spencer and the three agents in the room. He wasn't sure that Spencer was joking. Aaron frowned when he saw that the three agents were very uncomfortable.

"Yes. When they moved in, he was open about himself being a God but never said a word about her. Oh, the paperwork was done correctly, but nothing was ever thought about her. Then she didn't age, and people wondered. Then she came home and found a man beating the shit out of her husband after dosing him with something that stopped him from being able to function. Before the man could hit her with the tranquilizer dart, she had him flayed. She called the cops, and they arrived just as he was dying, painfully. She didn't let anyone touch Jin. He was fine once he woke up, but the guy had enough of the stuff on him to kill Jin and Petal really." Richmond looked at his hand. "That's when my department was formed, and I worked my way up through it to get where I am. I've seen Gods and Goddesses who have loved humans to have them die. I've held the hand of a New God as they said goodbye to the first person they ever loved."

"What he's saying is that we have your back, no matter what," Delacroix said.

"I didn't even think that you two liked me," Aaron said.

"Oh, we didn't, but then we were looking at everything through the eyes of Erin Strauss, that changed tonight. Not looking at you as you are. You could have had her job a long time ago, but you didn't want it, but she was convinced you were trying to make her look bad. Going back through reports with fresh eyes is an eye-opener. We didn't want to do anything though until she made her first move. That's what today was about. We wanted her to do something that we could fire her for. We were coming to talk to you about exposing your role as a New God." Delacroix looked a little shamef ul as he spoke and it was the only thing that was settling down Aaron about it all.

Aaron looked at Spencer and Spencer nodded his head without even looking at Aaron. Aaron turned back to look at Richmond.

"What's the policy on revealing what a God is? I mean the God themselves."

"There is a reason that the application and hiring packet and everything that a person fills out to work
here doesn't ask it. It was part of what was negotiated with the first God to actually come to work here. There was a form hidden away from when the FBI was founded that was only changed a little. We are actually unsure if a God had ever worked in the FBI openly before our first big hire of them. But to answer your question directly, no you don't ever have to disclose what you are the God of. Rumors will start of course, but really no one needs to know."

Spencer hummed a little and looked right at Richmond as he finished speaking. "So my question is this, and really I should have asked it before now, we know that London has a God who had proclaimed himself the God of MI6. Though if anyone needs a God to control them it's those fuckers. How would an American institution take having someone proclaim themselves their God?"

"Like if someone walked into the FBI today and said that they were the God of the FBI? I am unsure, I guess it depends on what the God actually wants to do."

Aaron inhaled slowly and held it for a few seconds before he exhaled. "Not be a figurehead. I would want it all to stay internal, but I know that it would be nearly impossible."

The three Humans looked at Aaron with shock on their face. He didn't smile as any smile that he did would be feral.

"I am the God of Fidelity, Bravery, and Integrity. The God who did my intake told me so." Aaron knew that it was a lie, but he hoped that Apollo would hold up to that. "I've tried to prove him wrong, but he holds true to it. I can't exactly counter it as-" Aaron cut himself off abruptly before he said something.

"Because you've embodied that from when you joined," Richmond said with a smile.

Spencer stood up and walked to a wall. He grabbed a painting on the wall and opened it up to show a safe behind it. He pressed in a thirty-three digit code, and it opened. Inside were a lot of things and Aaron could only see a few, but Spencer pulled out a file. He walked over to Richmond and gave it to him. Richmond opened it up as Spencer walked over and sat on the arm of the couch again. He stared at Richmond as he read the paper.

"Apollo? Like the real Apollo?" Richmond asked as he handed the paper to Delacroix next.

"Well, I can't answer that can I?" Spencer asked.

"Well no I guess not, but he gave this to you?"

"To me for when I was finally ready to tell everyone who I was."

"We will have HR draft a statement for the entire class of agents that need to know. They will let you read it and change it. We have a lot to do and have little time to do it." Richmond was the first to stand up after he finished speaking and then he was shaking Aaron's hand and clasped Spencer on the shoulder. Delacroix and Calder followed behind, and neither of them even offered to shake Spencer's hand.

"Why are they scared of you?" Aaron asked.

"While I am not the God of Psychology, I can do enough shit to scare people into submission. As a God of Knowledge, it's easy to pass myself off as anyone really. I could have been the God of Shit and people would still be scared of me."

"Is there a God of Shit?" Aaron asked.
"Don't ask questions you don't want the answer to. Now, you go in and do what you need to do as far as work goes. I'm going to go into the kitchen and plan on things to eat for the team for dinner tonight because we had better get ahead of this now and see about saving breakfast, I'll bring yours to you when I have it done. Tell the team not to come in until tomorrow or the rumors are going to hit them as soon as they go into work." Spencer started to get up, but Aaron wrapped his hand around Spencer's wrist and pulled him down into Aaron's lap. Spencer glared at him, but there was no heat to it.

"Give me a kiss," Aaron said. He leaned, and Spencer hesitated for a second before he also leaned in. Aaron wondered how long Spencer would be skittish about the relationship turning into a relationship. Aaron smiled in the kiss before wrapping his arm around Spencer's waist as he pulled out of the kiss. He pressed his forehead to Spencer's. Spencer's eyes were close, and he seemed relaxed. Aaron squeezed on the waist in his arm, and Spencer opened his eyes. "Are you okay?"

"I just wasn't expecting Strauss to make this move this quick. It's not...I didn't have this planned. I didn't have any of this planned, and you just ruined it all. I wasn't going to tell you for a long time who you were, hell even what you were but it just-" Spencer sighed and closed his eyes. "I just need a little distance to sort out my head. I can usually guess what's going to happen with an outstanding degree and this blindsided me."

"I can understand that. I've seen you freaking out when things don't go the way you have planned, and that was when you were a New God in my eyes and not a very Old God who really should know better." Aaron held in the smile on his face until Spencer was pulling back and glaring at him. "Go to the kitchen, pout about your plans and get dinner planned. I'll tell the team to meet here sooner rather than later. That way we can minimize the chance of them hearing any of this from anyone else. I'm going to go in and deal with HR and be back as soon as possible."

"I do love you," Spencer said with a content smile on his face.

"I'm glad. Very glad otherwise what would be the sense in your one true love being reborn?" Aaron asked. He waited for Spencer to get up before he got up himself and started for the door of the bedroom to shoo Jack out and then get dressed in clothes that were more suited for his job. Jack was content on the bed with his toys of which Aaron was happy. The boy was very isolated, and Aaron knew that he needed to be socialized in some way, but he had no clue what to do. He would have to get Spencer in on that. That would be a battle for another day.
Chapter 19

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Everyone person, Human or God on this planet keeps souvenirs. They don't know it, but something of everything is inside of them. Rarely are the souvenirs something that they can see. I see Humans who try and prove that they are fine when they are not. They are changed by what they have seen. They are changed by what was done to them, to someone that they love. Almost no Human really thinks about what is kept inside after everything. Trauma that can't be seen is the hardest to treat but yet also the thing that's rarely actually treated. It's that trauma that creates some of the things in the world that are hunted. For being deviant, for being killers, for being anything except for what Humans think they should be.

Because anyone who can smile after witnessing a murder is fine right?

November 2009

Aaron was sitting in the chair in the suite that had been their standard on cases since it had all come out about Aaron being a New God. There was only a single bed, but there was an area that could be used as a workspace and either a couch or a chair in the room. Since neither of them slept, well Aaron was sleeping less and less, it wasn't prudent to have two beds anymore, and Aaron couldn't do work on a bed like Spencer. After two cases of Aaron acting weird, Spencer had gone to Richmond and then after that when JJ booked the rooms, they were in a suite with a single bed and working space. Aaron had not asked how Spencer had convinced the FBI about that. Aaron wasn't sure that he wanted to know if Spencer was paying for it or not.

That was another bit of startling information. Spencer actually wasn't technically being paid to work for the FBI. Every single cent of the money that he made was being funneled into education programs in the DC and in the Vegas and Pasadena areas. Spencer's money was old as hell and Aaron had learned a lot about the shadow world that the Old Gods had created to stay hidden in the new era of a time New Gods, and some new ones had not taken to finding out that the old ones were not fully dead. Spencer generally made more money in interest on his invested money and other diverse dividends as Spencer put it than he did in a day at the FBI, even with the money to match his degrees and the fact that he was a New God. Aaron had seen that increase in pay as well, ostensibly it was to pay for the fact that Gods did not sleep and therefore was technically working for longer than the Humans on the team, but Aaron knew that it was a perk for the fact that it was something used to draw Gods into the FBI.

Aaron was still being stared at by those who were around them on the job. Aaron was the first God to step forward in the US to claim to be a God of any agency. That was interesting. There was no way to test it other than the fact that a few Gods who Aaron had come across since he had become a God, Old Gods who the FBI knew of and ignored had stepped up after the press had got wind of him. Aaron hadn't realized exactly how many Old Gods Spencer had been in contact with and had been around in his time with Aaron.

A good bit of the higher-ups that were above wanted to remove Aaron from the BAU for his own good, which Spencer had defended twice so far that it wouldn't be good for Aaron at all. The Section Chief position was still empty as they were looking for someone who filled it that wouldn't have the same reservations about working above Aaron. There were few would not turn into Strauss over time. Aaron had defended himself twice at the same time as Spencer that he wanted nothing to do
with leaving the BAU as his team's Unit Chief. He would rather quit than be forced out of there and when he had threatened that, everyone had backed down. Aaron knew exactly how bad it would be for the New God of the FBI to quit the FBI. The press nightmare would be horrible.

The jet didn't have clearance to leave until the morning. There was a dense fog all over Oklahoma City, and it had crept in not long after the team had finished the case. Aaron shuddered as he looked down at the paperwork that he was working on. It was the case write up that was needed to finally put the case behind them, but Aaron still wasn't sure what he felt about the case. The eye thing creeped him out, and it was the first case that Aaron had worked fully since the higher-ups had backed off of pressuring him to take the Section Chief posting. Though that meant in that time that no one was actually being looked at for that position. Aaron had a stack of folders on agents who wanted to step into it. The BAU while one of the worst positions in the FBI as far as taking work home mentally, there were a lot of people who wanted in there for the prestige of working there. Aaron could weed through the majority on his own while he would ask for Spencer's opinion on a few others. There were a few that Aaron had already looked at that he had dismissed right off because there were issues with New Gods that worked elsewhere in the FBI. Hell, one had waged a campaign to get one thrown out of the FBI. Aaron had no clue why that man thought that he was would be added to the BAU because the BAU worked the most with New Gods than most other units in the FBI, whether it was helping one or finding one that had been taken. Or even looking into the death of one.

Aaron looked up at Spencer as he got up off the bed again and went to the desk area to settle there with the laptop. The laptop was new to what Spencer carried around with him, and it was personal in use, which Garcia was very upset about because it was one of the best on the market and even she hadn't been able to hack it. Aaron felt that frisson of something inside of him when he looked at the logo on it. Aaron had never felt that before he had become a New God. He felt like he wanted to work through it on his own so he had not asked Spencer about it. Aaron had learned from Spencer to just go with his gut. He had trusted his gut in his job for years but hadn't yet followed through on that too much in his personal life when it came to his newfound way of life.

Spencer got up from the desk chair to the window. Aaron got up to follow him over there. It was dark outside, a weird dark from the fog that had settled in. Aaron wasn't sure if Spencer could see any further than him, but still, the city looked weird.

"Can't settle?" Aaron asked.

"Not really. I just can't decide on what I want to do, and that's upsetting me."

"What do you need?"

"I don't know. I feel like I'm expecting something else to happen and it's not, so I'm antsy with energy that just isn't going anywhere."

"What do you want to do about that?" Aaron asked. He wrapped his arms around Spencer's, banding one around his chest and then dropping the other slowly down to cover Spencer's soft cock in his pants. Spencer didn't react at all, so Aaron removed his hand from there and splayed it across Spencer's stomach. Aaron was a little shocked that sex wasn't something that Spencer wanted. Spencer almost never turned down sex. The only other time that he had since the relationship had turned into something more than just sex was when Jack was sick a month and a half ago and he was very clingy and two minutes after Aaron had tried to get Spencer to go to the bedroom, Jack had come out of his room, blanket in his arms, teddy bear hugged to his chest, and a pout on his lips.

"I don't know," Spencer said, and he sounded exactly like a petulant child who wasn't getting what he wanted.
"Is there anything fun here?"

"I can find something fun to do anywhere we go. Did you want to go and do something?" Spencer asked as he turned around in Aaron's arms and slung his arms over Aaron's shoulders. He rubbed his cheek to Aaron's in a show of new affection. It had cropped up over the last few weeks, and Aaron wondered if it was something that they had used to do. Aaron liked it. He really did, and he didn't want to question it and have Spencer stop doing it.

"I think that I do. I like it when you show me cities from your point of view. Especially now that you have been telling me about things you know that Spencer Reid, New God of Psychology wouldn't know."

Even though Aaron wasn't looking at Spencer's face, he knew he was blushing, and it wasn't all the heat he was feeling on his cheek. Aaron turned his face a little and kissed Spencer's cheek.

"So what kind of clothes should I wear?"

"Hmm," Spencer said. He pressed a kiss to Aaron's cheek as well before he pulled back to look Aaron in the eye. The look he was getting said that Spencer was debating what he could get away with showing Aaron. If it was going to be just a little too much and make Aaron pull back some. Aaron had tried not to do anything like that, but he knew that Spencer had a lot of messed up things in his long life. "I think bar clothes."

"Okay, then I'll go and get dressed while you do whatever you need to do." Aaron knew that sometimes Spencer had to call someone or email them. It was part of why he had the computer with him. It was severely protected, and no one was getting onto it or hacking anything that the computer sent.

"What were you reading earlier today?" Spencer asked.

"Oh," Aaron said as he felt the blush creep up on his face. He had been reading on his Kindle which he only read on cases lately, but he had been reading on his Kindle more at home as well. Aaron was reading the memoirs that Spencer had put out. Spencer had never asked about them since Aaron had found out that he was Mimir. Aaron didn't want to read over the memoirs with Spencer in the room with him. Not the physical ones but the books had come out on the Kindle and Aaron had purchased them.

Aaron wasn't sure though that books here helping him learn about Mimir or the person that Mimir had been before he became Spencer Reid. Instead, Mimir was this big unknown that didn't quite fit into the person that Spencer Reid was, or the Spencer that Aaron had come to know. Aaron was enjoying reading Mimir's thoughts about history, including his life in the Tudor Dynasty. That was a big thing that Aaron was engrossed in at the moment, hence why he was reading a lot more than he normally did. Aaron was enthralled with learning what Spencer had done over the years while the Tudors had ruled England. Aaron had always been fascinated with Tudor England.

Histories and even a few fiction books had been Aaron's solace throughout the years from his job. He would buy them and read them before giving them away. Aaron read too many books to keep all of them, and so the upgrade to a Kindle for some was nice. Aaron had gone back through and bought most of the books he had read before again as they came out on the digital platform.


Spencer was looking at him with a strange look on his face like Spencer was trying to read him. Aaron just gave him a smile.
"You bought them on the Kindle?" Spencer asked as he walked over to where Aaron had stashed his Kindle. He was reaching for it when Aaron dashed across and grabbed it from under his hand. Aaron knew that it wasn't like Spencer would find out at some point, but still, he felt like maybe he shouldn't read them in front of him.

"I didn't want to read the hardcover versions in front you. Before when I tried to read the books, I never got far at all, it felt wrong somehow, but yet I had the constant urge to read them. Since I've become a New God, I haven't tried them until just a month ago. I don't know if it was the fact that I knew who you were or I knew who I used to be." Aaron felt the blush coming back on his cheeks. He hugged the Kindle to his chest, but all Spencer did was smile at him. Spencer leaned in and kissed Aaron's cheeks, once on each one.

"I don't care that you read them just your reaction was one of shame, and I don't ever want you to feel shame for trying to learn about me. There is a lot of history for me, and I can't remember it all in a linear fashion. I don't try and keep things from you. There is just too much for me to ever sit down and tell you my whole life. There is a lot missing in those memoirs, the things that I would never tell anyone but maybe you."

"I know, and I'm not reading them because of anything other than I understand how trying to share would be hard given how long you have been alive, which still boggles my mind." Aaron looked down at the Kindle in his arms, and he looked up again. "Is there a God that's older than you?"

"I have a friend that he and I both pester each other over who is older. I'm the creation of Man's thirst for knowledge, he's the creation of Man's thirst for change. We are really unsure who came first so about two hundred years ago we decided that it was a tie and we are twins."

"Have I met him?" Aaron asked.

"No, he keeps a very low profile as a God. Last I knew he was like me and hiding as a New God. He's a good guy, and he just wants to live his life the way that he wants without anyone telling him what he should be doing. If we run across him, I'll introduce you." Spencer smiled at Aaron again before going over to get changed for going out. Spencer's casual nudity was astounding to Aaron, but then Spencer had lived through the times where the body was not something to be hid and covered up. He had lived through the times were clothes were thin and left little to the imagination. Spencer had walked the entire world over the ages.

Aaron watched as Spencer changed into jeans and a thick sweater. It wasn't Spencer's normal bar clothes. In fact, Aaron hadn't seen him wear clothes like that to the bar at all. Aaron liked watching Spencer move. He was less careful about not acting like Mimir when it was just the two of them even on cases. Aaron had learned that the way that he acted at home was very close to Mimir and it was easy to see why he acted like he did when they were at work, even though a lot of that had been fading as well. He was sort of growing up in front of the team. It was a good way to make sure that he was not called out on the changes. Aaron though wasn't sure if he liked the fact that the team was seeing the side of him that only Aaron had seen before. Aaron knew that a lot of was going to change over the fact that they were both well aware of most of the secrets that each other had now.

When Spencer was ready, he turned and looked at Aaron looking at his clothes. Aaron settled his Kindle back down into the pocket in his go bag where it lived before he grabbed some clothes to change into. He went with Spencer's dress model of comfort as it seemed that they were not going to a bar where he would need to look his best. Aaron understood dressing to impress and dressing to relax, even if he wore suits more than anything else when he was out and about.

Aaron looked up from stuffing his suit into the garment bag to see that Spencer had tied his hair up into a messy ponytail. He looked different like that, something about him was endearing but kind of
hot at the same time. Aaron frowned because he felt his cock hardening in his pants but knew that Spencer didn't want sex. Aaron wondered what Spencer would do if he went into the bathroom to jerk off. Spencer looked Aaron up and down, and he grinned before looking at his cock and leering.

"I'll take care of that at the bar." Spencer held out his hand, and Aaron stepped up to take it before he was being pulled from the room. Aaron watched as Spencer slipped the key card for the room into his pants pocket. Aaron had his on him as well, just in case. They were alone in the elevator because it was too late for most people to be out and about and yet too early for anyone who was out to have a good time to come back. Aaron put himself on the far side of the elevator to look Spencer up and down. He wasn't quite Spencer at this moment, but Aaron wasn't sure if he was Mimir. There was a way that he held his body that said he was dangerous and Aaron knew that part of that was to make Humans not want to mess with him.

The elevator stopped on the ground floor, and Spencer waved Aaron out first. Aaron walked out and angled himself toward the door. He was halfway across the lobby when he realized that he did not hear Spencer's footsteps behind him. He turned to look and saw that Spencer was walking to the concierge desk. There was a very pretty woman there, and Spencer was flirting with her. It wasn't anything more than innocent flirting. Aaron walked up behind him and listened as Spencer said a very specific few things that Aaron had never heard him say before when he flirted with anyone back home at the club. When Spencer stopped, Aaron watched as the lady turned to the safe that was behind her and opened it up. She pulled a business card out and handed that over to Spencer. Spencer nodded his head and tapped the counter with the card before turning to Aaron.

"I have what we need," Spencer said, and he handed the card over to Aaron.

Aaron looked at the card and saw that it was nearly blank. There were three symbols on it and nothing else. Aaron flipped it over and saw there was nothing there either. Aaron handed it back, and Spencer slipped it into the pocket where he had slipped the key card for the room.

The streets were not as dead as Aaron thought they would be, but still, there were not a lot of people walking like they were. It was November, and while the weather was mild, Aaron knew that humans weren't used to cold, so they didn't walk anywhere during this time of year. It was colder at the moment than it normally got.

"So where are we going?"

"I have no clue. It's been a very long time since I've gone to this bar and it's changed locations at least a few times since then. I'll know it when I see it. This is mainly to get us in. Even if we find it, without that card or those symbols tattooed on the skin, we won't be getting in." Spencer held his hand out, and Aaron slipped his into it. The public displays of affection were something that Aaron was slowly getting used to. Spencer didn't usually do more open shows in strange places, but the hand holding was something that Spencer liked. Aaron tried not to think about that it just might be because he was afraid of losing Aaron again.

Aaron had already set himself up to live with whatever quirks Spencer had because he had seen Aaron die once before. It was sometimes hard to think about that. Aaron knew that he had some kind of memories about it all. He had too many strange feelings about everything to not have memories buried somewhere. Aaron figured that his powers as a God carried those memories. If Aaron made sure that he was a little safer as to not cause Spencer harm, he could live that. He

Spencer kept up a narrative about how the city had changed since the last time that he had been there which in all of the cities that they had been to Spencer had been to this one the most recent. Spencer preferred bigger cities to live in before he had become Spencer and Aaron could understand that because it meant that it was easier for him to hide.
"So when was the last time that you were here? And why were you here?"

"I was living as a human at the time. The Gods never betrayed that. I was working as a Federal Officer. I had been there for a little while. Domestic assignment even though I was usually abroad and it was the spring of ninety-five."

Aaron swallowed thickly at that date.

"Were you one of the first responders?"

"No, I was in the building. I was a little injured, but I got people out who could be saved and then I faked my death. They are still kind of looking for me, but I looked different enough that no one is ever going to connect Jessy James with Spencer Reid."

Aaron stopped walking and looked at the back of Spencer's head until their connected hands told Spencer that Aaron wasn't moving.

"What?" Spencer asked.

"That's a case that Gideon and Ryan were working that they brought Dave and me in on. Hell, I've given it to Morgan for him to try and help us track him down. If it weren't for the fact that every single person who escaped the building was because of him, we would look at him as someone who was part of the bombing. CIA Agent Jessy James who had been there to help with a case that became domestic after a few years of chasing it abroad."

"I didn't realize that someone had brought the BAU into that. I've never seen the case in the cold case files."

"No, you wouldn't have. I keep it in my office. It's a strictly need to know. Technically, I shouldn't have told you any of this, but it isn't like you are going to tell anyone about it. Shit. That makes me wonder about a few other cases we've worked over the years." Aaron snorted and shook his head before another thought hit him. "You solved a cold case that was a missing persons case that happened in the eighties. It was strange, and the officers came to us for help with is as the town never let it go."

"That was a New God that wishes to never be found again. I helped him hide, but yes, I contacted him to let him know that the town was still looking for him or at least his body. So we did a quiet file swap. I added a faked DNA sample to an unclaimed dead body a few towns over. When there was a look for the DNA, it was flagged in the BAU database, and then I could close it. I was the one that started the DNA search as the hair from the God was on file. I make sure that the case is what I think it is before closing it, but I knew his face from the image."

"How many missing cases and even death cases where the body is never found is Gods, of both kinds, hiding?"

"Just stupid ones and not a lot really. The Oklahoma case was the only life I've moved on from that I hadn't closed it out in some way. Moving out of town and just never responding to people is an easy way of doing it. Not running away in the middle of the night. The younger New Gods who don't want to be public don't learn that until one of us older Gods, whether a New God or an Old one steps in and teaches them."

"Makes me wonder if we should just let you and some of the other Old Gods into our files to find the cases that we can close and literally have a case reason called Act of Gods."

Spencer laughed at Aaron, he tried to keep his laughter contained but it bust out of his lips, and he
doubled over in laughter. Aaron stepped close again, waiting for Spencer to come back up before he linked their hands and leaned in to kiss Spencer. Spencer gave him two quick pecks before pulling away from him. "I can't wait until you tell Richmond. He's hunted a few New Gods that the FBI had got wind of and were wanting to talk to, but when the FBI got there, the Gods were like ghosts."

"There's a God or two placed up high in the FBI that no one knows about isn't there?" Aaron asked.

"There is. They make sure that everything is kept above the board. It's not like the FBI would do anything to them, but some Gods want no attention on them. For me, it depends on how I feel. Sometimes I've played as New Gods before and sometimes I just want to be human."

"So where is this bar?" Aaron asked as he turned them to head in the direction that they had been heading before. They were right at an intersection and Aaron wasn't sure which direction that Spencer wanted them to go. Aaron was looking left and right before he looked forward and there was something just so right about that direction that he pointed that way as he looked at Spencer's face.

Spencer grinned at him and nodded. Aaron gave a mirthful laugh as he thought about that feeling of rightness that was in the direction that they were walking. They waited for the light to change and the white walk symbol to light up before he started into the intersection. The walk to the bar was just a few minutes longer. Aaron actually walked past it before he stopped and turned as that rightness felt like it was behind him.

Aaron looked at the door that was in front of him and the longer he looked at it, the symbols on the card started to appear in a black ink on the dark grey of the wood that made up the door. "That's a neat trick."

"It is. Gods magic. That's what we call it. It's the ability for us to hide from Humans if we so wish. The magic that created us allows us to be apart from humans if need be. It's nice but there are many like me who don't want to be cut off from Humans all the time, and there are those that would rather never talk to a Human as long as they live." Spencer waved at the door and Aaron reached out to grab the knob but as he did a man became visible. Aaron pulled his hand back, and the man disappeared from view. Aaron snorted and touched the knob the man held out his hand, and Spencer laid the card in it. The man's eyebrow cocked, and he gave Spencer a little glare. "I'm never denied, wherever I go."

"Old One," the man said, and he bowed his head and the door opened without Aaron even turning the knob. The door just creaked back, and it still felt like Aaron was holding the doorknob. Aaron let go, and the feeling was gone. Aaron stepped into the bar and found that it was like the club, there was a hallway and then the bar itself on the other side of a door. Aaron wondered what kind of God magics were in place along that hallway.

Aaron entered the room to find half of the eyes on him. Aaron started to feel like he was being glared at to leave when he realized that the ones looking at him were Gods and they were looking at him in shock. Spencer bumped into the back of Aaron and Aaron stepped forward enough to allow Spencer to enter.

"Mimir," one of the women said as she stood up.

"Artie, how are you?" Spencer asked.

"I'm good. I was going to ask how you are, but I can tell that you are over the moon." Artie looked Aaron up and down, and Aaron felt like he had met her before but not a long time ago. There was something very recently familiar. "I did not believe my brother when he called as he was drunk as
"Apollo was not telling a tall, drunk tale," Spencer said, and he wrapped his arm around Aaron's waist to pull him over to the bar. There were two seats open. Their backs were to the wall. It wasn't until Artie looked at the two of them with a very questioning look that Aaron figure it out. She felt like half of a whole. And that other half Aaron had met the night he became a New God. This was Artemis the twin to Apollo.

Artemis came around the bar and kissed Spencer on each cheek before she turned to face Aaron. "You made Mimir wait too long for your return, Ar."

"I know that I did. It's nice to see you again, Artemis." Aaron looked at the other Gods and realized that every single one of them was an Old God. He wondered why there were so many in the bar, and it was answered when Aaron saw that the bartender was an Old God and there was a flyer on the wall behind him. Tonight was an Old God meet up. Aaron looked at Spencer with a smile on his face and two drinks were set down before they could order. Spencer picked his up and took a sip before he grinned. He picked up Aaron's and near shoved it into his face. Aaron took it and took a sip. It tasted like a summer breeze on a tropical island. Aaron closed his eyes as he took another drink, this time a deeper pull of the liquid into his mouth. He didn't realize that he had drunk it all in one go until his mouth was empty.

The bartender was right there with another one.

"Please tell me that you have bar to home service tonight?" Spencer asked.

"We do. I also have Sober Up Potions," the bartender said.

"Sober up Potions?"

"It's a joke on Harry Potter. It'll help us get the alcohol out of our systems and leave us with just a raging hunger for a day. No headache, nothing. You couldn't take it until you were a God or I would have given you one before."

"So we are getting drunk?"

"This is a party. For old friends who are seeing each other for the first time in a long while. Yes, we are all going to get smashed, there might even be sex in the bathrooms or in a booth."

Spencer laid his hand on Aaron's thigh, and Aaron felt his erection was back. Aaron swallowed again and nodded his head in agreement. Spencer leaned in close, his lips pressed to Aaron's ear. "No one will touch you but me. They might watch, but they won't touch."

"There isn't a God, New or Old that has not heard the tale of what Mimir did because of the death of Ar. No one will touch you for fear of what he would do. Mimir has not taken a lover that he would parade around us Gods, human or God, since your first death." The bartender gave Aaron a smile before he handed over another drink after finishing talking.

"Who are you?"

"You'll find out one day or you won't." The man winked, and Aaron laughed.

"Let's have some fun," Spencer said, his lips still at Aaron's ear. Aaron looked at the men and women who were in the bar, and Aaron saw that all of them were paired with one of the Gods. Temporary lovers, it seemed.
Aaron felt a flare of jealousy at the others lovers that Spencer had taken over the long time that they had been apart. He knew it was stupid and that Spencer would just give him that look that said he was only a little upset, but it helped Aaron to calm down. He allowed Spencer to pull him to the middle of the bar and everyone pitched in to make a dance floor of sorts. The tables and chairs were lifted and attached to chains that were hanging from the ceiling. That was a danger in areas where there were earthquakes, but Aaron also figured that the chains were God made and not able to break. Music started to play, and it wasn't anything that Aaron knew from this life, but it wove into his soul and made his body move as he wrapped himself around Spencer. This was a good way to shake the case they had been on. Aaron wasn't sure that he would be able to look at a taxidermy shop the same ever again.
Chapter 20

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

It always confuses humans or even New Gods when other Gods celebrate holidays that have to do with Gods from other religions. There are Gods that do not have holidays for them. I have never wanted one. I have never needed one. I'm celebrated thousands, sometimes millions of times a day. When that zing of happiness happens along my bond that I have to those who worship at my statue, I know that I am needed. I don't need a day that is dedicated to me but just like Humans there are all kinds of Gods out there and many need more than just worship to feel like a God.

March 2010

Aaron entered Spencer's apartment to see that Jack was indeed with him along with Ri and with Jessica, which was confusing as hell as Aaron could see Ri. He knew that she could hide what she was from Jessica, but Aaron just had a feeling that this was not the case this time. There was a crash from the kitchen, and before Aaron could look to see who was making a mess, Jessica was up, and she sighed in exasperation. She came back out with Peaches who was covered in flour and what looked like orange glitter.

"What's going on?" Aaron asked.

"Jessica had Jack, and it seems that something happened," Spencer said.

"Yes?" Aaron asked.

"So we have a new pet," Spencer said, and he pointed to a corner where there was a lump under a blanket. There was just what looked like a scaled snout sticking out from under it. The blanket raised up pretty far and then when the creature exhaled, smoke came out.

"Jack made a dragon," Aaron said, and he never thought in his life that he would say those words.

"Jack made a dragon," Jessica and Spencer said at the same time.

"Also, Jessica is well versed in magic of the Gods."

"Really?" Aaron asked as he looked from Spencer to Jessica and back to Spencer.

"Yes. I had a boyfriend who was best friends with a New God. The child the God was raising was very interesting. He made and discarded new friends as quick as his mind changed. One of them came home with me. A Pixie named Hubert who really likes to eat rose petals. He goes down the block to the flower shop and helps them clean up by eating the bad petals on roses and other flowers as well as helping them grow some of the flowers they sell better. Haley didn't like Hubert, never has so I never brought him up around you. When I took Jack back to my place a week ago, Ri came with, and it was after Ri and Hubert met that Ri introduced herself to me. I've just met Peaches today." Jessica handed over Peaches to Aaron and Peaches climbed Aaron's suit, getting flour and glitter everywhere but Aaron didn't care.

Peaches had been moody and a lot distant from Aaron since he had become a New God. Spencer told Aaron that he was just adjusting to his best friend changing in a way that he wasn't ready for. Aaron could understand that a great deal. He knew that Peaches was sensitive.
"So what is the dragon's name?"

"Jack has not named them yet. They have been asleep since being manifested. Jack thought they might be cold, so he covered them up." Spencer got up from where he was sitting and laid down the cookbook that was in his arms. Aaron realized that it was a ham cookbook. Aaron looked at the cover of it and saw that it was over one hundred different ways to cook a ham. Aaron wondered why Spencer was that worried about cooking a ham.

Spencer lifted the blanket and Aaron tried not to laugh. The snout was dark, but now that Aaron had seen the rest of it, he knew that it was a dark purple while the rest of the dragon was lilac purple in color. Aaron looked at Spencer to see that he was grinning.

"It's purple because that's your favorite color," Aaron said, and he poked Spencer in the chest when he got close to him.

"I'm well aware, but this means that someone is going to have to go and tell everyone in the building that we have a Dragon. Jin and Petal won't be shocked, and Petal might even tell everyone if we want her to."

"Are pets even allowed?" Aaron asked.

"I own the building Aaron, I can do whatever the hell I want."

"You own it?" Aaron asked.

"Yes, Jin and Petal run it but I own it as well as a great deal of other things in this area. I buy real estate when it's cheap and slowly build up the areas. I have places like this across the country. It's how I have so much money."

"I just assumed you have diamonds and gold stashed somewhere and dip into it when needed."

"I do have that. So who's telling Petal?" Spencer asked.

Aaron just gave Spencer a look that said precisely who would be telling Petal.

"Why would Spencer have money stashed?" Jessica asked.

Spencer looked at Jessica and frowned. Aaron knew that they had messed up there just a little bit. Aaron had kind of forgot that she was there. Aaron sighed and opened his mouth to talk but Spencer just held out his arm, and Jessica stepped up to slip her arm into his. They were cute together.

"So, since you are going to be around us more as Jack has taken to you well and even Ri has told me nothing but good about you, I think that a proper introduction is needed. Who is the oldest God that you know of that's alive, and the world knows about?"

"Mimir. His chronicles are wonderful. I read each one when it's published. I have since he started to publish them. Haley used to call me stupid for believing it."

"Yes, well Haley and her issues are something for another time. But here." Spencer tugged on Jessica until they were across the room. Spencer reached into a box and pulled out a book.

The box had come in the mail just before they had gone on their last case, but it had literally been dropped off right before they had left, so Aaron had kind of forgot about it. Spencer handed the book to Jessica. Aaron saw the cover and knew that it was the newest edition of the Journals of Mimir. Jessica gasped and grabbed the book from Spencer's hand. She flipped it open and looked at the
cover pages. Aaron walked over to where they were but looked at Jack who was still just coloring away at the coffee table. Ri was over beside him, pointing at things on the page.

"How did you get this?"

"Read the dedication out loud," was Spencer's only answer.

"Okay," Jessica said. She flipped back to a page that she had missed. She gasped and looked at Aaron before she started to read. "To AH and his son Jack, for showing me what I had been missing in my long life since I had lost the greatest thing I ever had." Jessica looked, Spencer, as she shut the book and the look on her face was probably pretty damned close to what had been on Aaron's face the night that Aaron had found out who he really was. Jessica looked at Aaron next.

"Are you okay?" Aaron asked.

"This is Mimir?" Jessica asked Spencer.

"Yes."

"Holy fucking shit," Jessica said. She had not let go of Spencer's arm, but she was looking at him like he was well like he was a God. "No wonder you knew about Haley. I mean she has written some pretty disgusting things about how Aaron was fucking you before he divorced her and I didn't believe it. I still don't because Aaron isn't made that way. He would have divorced her before he did that. But Gods."

"The sex came a long time after that. A very long time even in my way of thinking." Spencer was smiling at Jessica. He pulled his arm from Jessica's and reached for the pen that was sitting on the bookshelf beside where they were. He took the book from her slack hand and wrote something inside of it before handing it back. "This is my set that I send to a few friends as well as a few extras that I can do what I want with. So from now on, I'll get you a copy as soon as I get them from my publisher."

"That will make me the envy of my reading group. We make your books our books of the month when they come out. I've seen where you ship some to readers who you notice the reviews of online. The group will know it's from you, but they will shit themselves when I keep getting them."

"I'm glad to make you the envy of women in your group."

Aaron was about to break up the talk when he heard his phone go off. He pulled it from his pocket and frowned as he read the message. "Spencer, we have a case. Shit, Sheila is away."

"I can watch Jack. We can stay here with his new pet, and I'll get you updates as I know them on the name and gender of the dragon." Jessica was looking down at the book and smiling.

"I have plenty of food in the cupboards and in the freezer as well. Anything you see you can eat. The salsa in the fridge is very spicy so don't let Jack make you think that it's not. He did that to Sheila. I don't think it was malicious more than just him wanting to play a joke. Ri and I are trying to work on that with him, but one never knows at his age exactly how well that all goes over."

"I'll make sure not to eat the salsa. Are you sure you are okay with me staying here?" Jessica asked.

"Yes. Aaron and I pretty much live here and only visit his apartment on occasion. I've been debating making this a two-floor apartment. Kind of like a condo. I don't know yet though."

Aaron rushed Spencer along to get bags ready for the case and to spend a few minutes with Jack.
This was not the way that Aaron wanted the day to go, but at least there was someone else that loved Jack that was there for him. Aaron was still a little unsure about the rest of the Brooks' family, but at least Jessica was in the corner of whatever was best for Jack. That was something off of Aaron's shoulders. Jessica, when the time was right, and Jack started to really ask about his mother, Jessica could be the one to tell Jack all about her when she was younger, before she had become what she had become. Jessica had more happy and pleasant memories of Haley than Aaron did.

Aaron felt his skin crawling. Spencer was looking at him with pity in his eyes, and Aaron knew why. Aaron understood full well why Spencer was looking at him with pity. There wasn't a damned thing that Aaron could do about it though. Aaron could hear the team in the room next to them talking. All of them. Aaron and Spencer were in their room while it seemed the rest of the team had congregated into Morgan's room to talk. Probably to talk about Aaron.

"Is there a club here in New Mexico?" Aaron asked.

"What?" Spencer asked. He blinked a few times and his nose crinkled as he tried to recall what Aaron said. Just because Spencer was looking at him didn't mean that Spencer was listening to him. Aaron had learned that a long time before. Aaron repeated what he said. "Oh. Yes, there is one here. Another Bacchus club at that. So is that what you need? Though this one does not have sex rooms."

"I just want to drink and forget. I don't care about what happens after I get drunk. I'll hold you in my lap and thrust my cock up into your clothed ass to get off for all I care."

"Well I am not sure about that one, but we can go to the club if that's what you need." Spencer walked to the wall that was between their room and Morgan's and knocked on it. Aaron heard Morgan's voice loudly from the other room.

"What's that about?"

"I knew that you were going to want one of two things. You were either going to want to go to the club, or you were going to want to fuck me into the mattress to get rid of the issues you are having. If that was the case, I was going to so the haircut knock, and they were going to leave for a little while until I texted the all clear."

"Wow, that's. I don't think I would ever live it down if you had to use that one." Aaron felt the blush creeping up on his face because of that, and he rubbed at the back of his neck.

"Did you bring club clothes?" Spencer asked.

"I brought clothes that are good enough to be considered club clothes." Aaron stood up and grabbed his go bag. Even though he knew that he had nothing to hide form Spencer as far as his body went, there was still something about changing in front of each other that had Aaron a little on edge. Spencer did it all the time, and Aaron didn't care, but there was something inside of him that refused to let him change in front of Spencer most of the time.

The club was actually in walking distance of the hotel. Spencer was already planning on not drinking, but Morgan and Dave overrode him on that. They would stay sober and then the rest could have fun. Aaron tried to order the drink that he had at the bar, but it wasn't there. So Aaron had what Dev had given him that one time. Aaron drank it and found that it wasn't as effective as it had been the one time, but it was enough that he knew with careful drinking it would get him drunk and forgetful.

"Jessica just texted me," Spencer said as he sat down beside Aaron at the table. He reached for
Aaron's glass, but it wouldn't lift off of the table. Aaron picked it up and handed it to Spencer. Spencer took a sip. "The dragon is a female, and her name is Stormy. She breathes thankfully fake fire."

"Dragon?" JJ asked as she leaned into Spencer's side. Spencer reached up like he was going to wrap his arm around her, but Aaron growled.

Aaron was not sure where the growl came from, but there it was. He tried to settle himself down, but JJ moved away from Spencer all the same. Spencer laid a hand on Aaron's thigh and squeezed, a bit of reassurance that he was fine and he was Aaron's.

"Jack's a precocious child and sometimes when children are that way they create creatures. It's basically how Gods are created only it's a group of adults that their thoughts, their prayers that create a God. About ninety-five percent of the time the creature is what amounts to imaginary friends. Adults don't see them, but the kids do, even the friends of the kids. Then you get children that are like Jack, and they want more than just an imaginary friend, they want a pet as well. Jack's only ever asked for a pet Dragon. We went to the store and looked at various animals. The college kids in our building are usually pretty damned good at taking care of an animal when people are away. Jack wasn't going for it, Bearded Dragon, snakes, lizards, cats, dogs, fish, hamsters, he had his choice of pets, and we were not going to walk out without one that he wanted only he wanted none. He really wanted a dragon even though dragons are not technically real."

"Not technically," Dave said.

"Well, think of it like this. One human can do a lot, two can do more, many more can do a lot more. A child can create a creature but if that creature doesn't really exist it would take more than one child thinking of the exact same thing to make that creature real. Stormy is alive, and she'll probably maybe eat, but she can't affect the world more than Jack can, and that means that because Jack can't breathe fire, neither can she."

"You have a dragon in your apartment?" Morgan asked.

"Oh no!" Spencer tapped away on his phone and turned the screen around to show Morgan. "I have a lilac purple with dark purple accents dragon in my apartment who acts like a dog."

Morgan took the phone, and it was passed around for the team to see before it was given to Aaron. Aaron looked at the image to see that it was Jack and Stormy curled on a dog that Aaron knew had not been in there before. Cuddled in close were Peaches and Ri as well. And another one that Aaron assumed as Hubert.

"Peaches looks happy," Morgan said after a few minutes of stunned silence from the team.

"He's adapting well to Aaron becoming a God. Pixie's can lay a claim on a human better than they can Gods, but then Peaches has never been normal so he might be the Pixie to do it."

"Who are the other two?" Dave asked.

"Ri is actually Jack's imaginary friend who had turned into a quick nanny of sorts. If it's a run down to the ground floor to get food or the corner store, Jack can be left with her if I'm not around and Jessica or Sheila isn't. I am pretty sure that the third is Hubert and he's a friend that Jessica made who likes rose petals. I'll have to see about getting a rose bush added to the garden on the roof so that he can have a snack if he's going to come around with her more."

The topic of discussion moved away from that, and at one point Spencer and Aaron went out onto
Aaron calmed down the more he got the drink into him, and at one point Aaron knew that if he didn't sit down, he was doing to pass out. Morgan helped him sit down and then got into the booth with him to make sure he didn't tip over.

"You know that out of everyone on the team, I probably have the most clue about the thoughts in your head right now right?" Morgan asked.

"I think that today I figured out why I was made the God that I was, Morgan."

"Yeah?" Morgan asked.

The waitress set down two glasses of water on a tray on the table, and Morgan picked up both of them before handing one to Aaron. Aaron drank it down about halfway before he looked out on the dance floor. Dave had slipped away to talk to a lovely woman who was there alone while JJ, Prentiss, and Spencer were dancing. No one was getting close to them, and Aaron was pretty sure that it wasn't the fact that he and Spencer were Gods.

"As human evolve, they are creating more and more New Gods. There is an estimated one percent of the population of the world that has been turned into New Gods. We are unsure on the count of the Old Gods that are still around and the New Gods that were created before we even knew about the fact that there were Gods. As human divide things up, new Gods are being created. There has always been a balance to the Gods, Spencer has told me. That means for every good God created magic creates a counterpart a chaotic version to keep things in the balance. Today we met one of them. Spencer figures that he was one of a few Gods of Frustrated Love that have popped up. There are a few in jail that we've learned about in the years since we have started to keep track of things like that. I was created because humans are fucked up and as humans believed stupid and fucked up things, they create Gods to match that. I became the bogey man for the Gods who are going to wreak havoc on the world. I'm the face they see when they go to sleep."

"That is fucked up, but I can say this with all of the trust I have in you. I'm glad it's you and not someone else. You might be a straight-laced son of a bitch when it comes to us doing our jobs, but you care about us. You love us like family, and that's why you hurt when we hurt. I can't think of a person who is better suited for this job than you, Hotch."

"I'm not sure that I trust me with it." Aaron knew that he had loose lips because of the alcohol, but he didn't care.

"And that's why you deserve it. Look, since I've gotten used to Reid on the team and got to know him, I've started to read those damned journals that everyone raves about. The God Mimir's journals. He's a good person as well, but I am not sure that I would ever want to meet him on a dark street. He's been alive a long time, and he can forget things. He's one of the Chaos Gods, not because of the fact that he was created that way but because there is nothing else really that he could be. Knowledge is power, power corrupts. Yet he's still here. He's still fighting the good fight. He's still scary as hell."

Aaron laughed a little, and he hoped that Morgan just took it as drunk laughter from him because he didn't not want to be questioned on why he was laughing as hard as he was. Morgan had no clue who was really on the team, and Aaron wondered just how long that secret was going to be kept from the team. It was bound to come out. Foyet had figured out that Spencer wasn't a New God, there would be more.

Looking at Spencer, Aaron frowned as he thought about the fact that Morgan was right. There was darkness inside of Spencer. It was what allowed him to do what he didn't to Frank Breitkopf, it was what allowed him to get out of the hands of Tobias Hankel with no issue, even though JJ still bore a few scars of that one.
Aaron leaned his head back and hoped that some of the alcohol was going to leave his system soon right now he couldn't walk to the door much less all the way back to the hotel. After a few minutes, Aaron felt someone get into the booth with him, and his head was turned to where he was pressed to Spencer's neck. Aaron curled himself around Spencer as much as he could get with the table.

"It's always hard when one sees the truth of one's self and to see it in a man who was making a mockery of love and child care. Who took his own life basically in front of his daughter, I can see why you are upset Aaron. I will be here for you as you come to grips with your new persona and your new way of thinking but remember this, as long as we are together. As long as we are one, nothing will break us apart."

"But we were broke apart for a very, very, very long time."

"And one day I'll tell you how that happened, but that's not today. Neither of us needs that burden today."

Aaron wanted to refute, demand to be told but all that would do was make Spencer dig his heels in. Spencer was longer in this world, and than Aaron, he had patience and a long time to get a grip on it. Aaron wasn't going to win, and it wasn't exactly a battle he wanted to win anyway.
Chapter 21

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Gods can worship each other on certain days. Sometimes they do it in mockery but others its because they genuinely feel like they need it. It does not sustain Gods in the same way that Human worship does, but it does feel good. To humans knowledge is power. The power to get ahead in life, the ability to subjugate other Humans, the power to heal those that are sick, the power to care for those that need help. There is a human phrase about the fact that knowledge is power so study hard and be evil. Knowledge is not necessary to be evil, but there are those who do use their power to do harm. Gods do not get to pick who worships them. Those that are evil, those that are genuinely despicable Humans, their worship feels no different to the God that they worship than the worship of little Susie who just really wants to be able to read whenever she wants and hates having to wait for her mother to be the one to read to her.

If I could track the worshipers that I have and kill the ones who worship me for what their knowledge allows them to do to other humans, I would. I've seen what evil can be done in the name of religion. I want no part of it. I want no part of the slaughter of Humans because they believe differently than others. I've seen too much of that over my very long life.

I would not get away with that much murder though, not in this day and age.

April 2010

Aaron had never considered himself all that religious. He had seen what people who were considered good religious people would do to others long before he joined the FBI. Long before he had become a lawyer. Long before he had turned eighteen. His parents had gone to church every Sunday morning and for every holiday, and when something else didn't interfere on Wednesday nights. Aaron was seven the first time that he realized that it had nothing to do with his parents actually caring about religion, about God and had everything to do with gossip. The gossip that would circulate if they were not a church as well as the gossip they could overhear for either his mother to spread or his father to take advantage of for his job as one of the bigger lawyers in the area.

As Aaron's awareness of life expanded so did his understanding that humans did horrible things to each other in the name of religion. It wasn't just the wars and crusades and other things in history. He heard stories of what his mother and her friends did to women who got pregnant out of wedlock, how horrible that they had made those women because they were not married. When Aaron had learned more and more about the New Gods, he had not thought about the worship needed to keep the God alive that his parents worshiped. It wasn't until his few theology classes in college that he started to think about that. He interviewed a few New Gods for a paper, but they were unable to answer the base question because they did not need worship to live as the other Gods did.

In the Hotchner household, Easter was celebrated, but it was more the family part that Aaron kept and less the religious part. Jack had not been raised to worship any single God over another. If there was a God that Jack was going to grow up to worship it was Mimir and it wasn't because Jack all but lived with Mimir but the fact that Spencer had made Jack a little boy who craved knowledge. He wanted to know everything. His brain was astounding, but then Aaron knew what brains could do when nurtured from a very young age. Hell, Aaron was pretty sure that Jack was smarter than him and that way saying something because Aaron was no slouch.
"Where's Reid?" Aaron asked as the team was packing up their supplies. The jet was delayed in coming back for them, and the team really did not want to fly commercial. Another team had needed the jet for another case that was multi-state, and the team had several areas to visit that was over eight hours away by car but a lot shorter by jet, so the team was going to stay in the hotel and wait out the return of the jet for them.

"He went out on one of the ATV's into the desert area," JJ said.

"Did he say when he was coming back?" Aaron asked.

"No," Morgan answered with a small grin on his lips. Aaron kind of wanted to punch it off. That look had been there in the time since the two of them had started to be more free with their affections when it was just the team around like on the jet to and from cases and sometimes even at meals. It had helped calm the team down in the wake of the changes that had been made.

Aaron was a light bit more famous when cases caught the eye of reporters more than just the standard. It wasn't that hard to deflect them most of the time. Especially after Aaron had produced a press statement that was emailed to the head of every single journalistic entity the country over. It was about how if a reporter that was focused more on who Aaron was and not on the case that they were working on hindered the case in any way shape or form, Aaron would make sure that they went to jail under the charges of obstruction of justice. Aaron was pretty sure that he could defend that case to any judge the country over and at least get the reporter put in jail long enough for the people in that area to get wind of it and to raise a cry about it. Yes, humans craved the gossip and news that journalists printed, but when it came to murder and violence like the team handled, it wasn't hard to understand that a journalist needed to focus on what was important and that was not the New God of the FBI.

"Sir," one of the officers who had been helping them said. Aaron turned to look at him. The man smiled. "He used one of our ATV's, and we have GPS locators on them. I can get you one from the shed, and you can go and find him if he doesn't come back soon."

"Actually, if one of you could take me to where he is. We can ride back together."

"Sounds good. Give me a few to go and get one. Anything you need to take?"

"Snacks?" JJ asked as she walked over with Spencer's messenger bag. He had left it at the station when they had gone out for the final trek to get the UnSub in Terlingua. Aaron took the bag and looked down into it. Reid's normal appetite had been missing for most of the case with the damage done to the illegal immigrants that had crossed the border and hell the damage done to those who tried to protect them. It was a mess, and the city was going to be reeling for a while. Still, Aaron was more worried about Spencer.

"Are you sure there are some in there? He barely ate meals and lived out of this thing." Aaron hadn't actually seen him eat a meal besides breakfast which he ate more than Aaron and Morgan combined at. It had been interesting to see the locals watch him eat his breakfast.

"I restocked it with the supplied from the jet," JJ said with a smile on her lips, it was a pained one but as close as any of them were going to get at that moment.

"That's where Morgan disappeared after we heard the jet was going away."

"Well, we can't have Reid be without his food," Prentiss said from the edge of the room. "Your chariot awaits, Hotch."
Aaron smiled at her and shook his head. He looked down at his suit and frowned. JJ pointed to the side of the room where Aaron's go-bag was.

"Rossi thought you might want to change when he heard that Reid had gone out into the desert," JJ said with a slightly happier smile on her face. Aaron nodded and walked across the room to grab it and find the bathroom to change out of his suit and into other clothes. Aaron had started to carry more normal clothes in the bag since he had finally ticked over into not sleeping at all. He understood why Spencer liked to stay in the room on some cases, and work and Aaron did as well. But when cases were done, and there was nothing to do but wait for their departure, Aaron liked to wander around the towns that they were in.

It was but a few minutes, and then Aaron was back out in jeans and a long sleeved shirt. It was getting dark, and that meant cold weather even for Texas in April. The desert was its own place, and Aaron knew from Spencer that it could get frigid there. Aaron knew that Spencer loved the desert, but he hadn't figured out yet why. Spencer had offered, but Aaron said he wanted to figure it out on his own. The lives of Mimir were not always published in order. Many of the original volumes that showed his life at the beginning were not out yet. Aaron was sure that the volumes were on the computer and he was waiting to get them done to publish them, or those were the ones that he was worried about publishing.

The trip out to find where Spencer had ensconced himself in the desert. He was not at the ATV, but Aaron had the officer leave him there. Aaron remembered the last time that Spencer had been out in the desert and wasn't sure that the officer needed to see Spencer like that. Aaron had no clue what he was going to be like anyway. The officer left him with little issue. Aaron knew that all of the officers had been a little in awe that there were two New Gods on the team. Spencer had been the attraction before, officers who wanted to talk to him, just be around him but now that Aaron was the embodiment of the FBI, he was a new attraction. Aaron looked around the desert for signs of where Spencer could have gone when he heard the sound of the ATV disappear from his hearing.

Aaron picked a direction, and he started to walk. He followed that part of his gut that Spencer had been teaching him to follow. It was interesting to follow something that he could not see, could not quantify but it had led him to several places where Gods had refuges in cities across the country. Aaron stopped as he crested a dune in the desert. There was a little bit of foliage that was trying to survive in the cold spring weather. Aaron crouched down to touch the weird grass.

A sound reverberated through the area, and Aaron swallowed as he tried to figure out what it was. Aaron was used to the sound of coyotes and bobcats, but this was not either one of them. This was something else entirely, and Aaron wasn't sure that it was a real live creature. Aaron wondered about the Gods of Old that still wandered around, he knew the myths and he knew what he had read in Spencer's books, but there was nothing about if some of the Old Gods had kept their animal forms and stayed hidden in them over the millennia. Some of them had totally made up forms that would be easy to spot, but Gods like the Greek ones could hide, even the Egyptians had a few forms that would be able to hide in the here and now.

Aaron was a God in his own right, and if that noise was from a God, it was a good bet that they would know exactly who he was, even in his new body. So Aaron stood up and moved to where the sound came from. He was pretty sure that he walked a mile if not more before he saw the creature and it was only his education in grade school that told him what it was. A Jackal. An honest to Gods jackal in the middle of Texas. That cemented it that it was a God, Aaron just wasn't sure which kind of God it was. Aaron watched as it hunkered down wiggled its ass like a cat getting ready to pounce. The jackal jumped over a small dune that Aaron could not see on the other side of, but he heard a squawk of what sounded like a bird and then the laughter of a human, well a God as Aaron knew that it was Spencer. Aaron took his time, moving to not make a sound and to not walk with rhythm.
as he did not want to disturb Spencer and his friend. The last time they had been in the desert
Spencer had talked about walking without rhythm so that a worm wasn't attracted and Aaron
wondered if he was talking about Gods.

On top of a dune, Aaron watched as the jackal and Spencer played. It was like Spencer was the
young man he acted like he was. Carefree and young. Spencer had never been carefree, and it
seemed that he had never been young. Aaron watched as they played and it was right then that he
figured out exactly where Spencer's love of the desert came from. He was all versions of the Gods of
Knowledge and the area of time that had not been published was when the Egyptian Gods had ruled
Egypt the areas. Spencer had to have been Thoth. Though Aaron knew about Seshat as well and
wondered if she was a consort of his or that was just something that Humans had put to their deities
to make them more Human.

The jackal barked its weird little bark and Aaron watched as Spencer turned his head right to Aaron.
The jackal stilled and waited for Aaron to start walking toward them before he moved to Aaron.
Aaron crouched down and held out his hand. The jackal sniffed him before licking at his fingers.
The jackal backed up and took flight as a black ibis. The shift was seamless and happened in what
would have been the blink of an eye if Aaron had actually blinked.

"Anubis?" Aaron asked.

"Yes," Spencer said, but he didn't get up off of his back where he was laying in the sand. He grinned
at Aaron and held out his hand. Aaron glared at that hand, and Spencer started to laugh, letting the
hand drop down to his chest. He looked up at the sky and sighed. Aaron tipped his head up to see
what he was seeing. The stars were bright and clear, they were out far enough that the light pollution
form Terlingua wasn't affecting their ability to see the stars.

"He's a little ways away from home isn't he?" Aaron asked.

"Not really. The dead are everywhere."

That stopped Aaron in his tracks a little. He had never thought about that. There were Gods of Death
from every religion that had more than one God.

"How long exactly have Gods of Death been following us around?"

"Always. There are so many, and they come to collect the spirits of the dead to help them move on if
they wish."

Aaron tried to digest that. About the Gods following his team but he was sure that it wasn't that.
There was probably just Gods that followed the death, but that didn't mean that Aaron had to like it.

"So what are you doing out here?" Aaron crouched down and then dropped down to his ass beside
Spencer. Spencer hadn't looked away from the sky yet. Aaron wondered when the last time that
Spencer had gone home to Egypt was. Spencer could appear places where he was being worshiped,
Aaron knew that. He could also move around a little in the area that he was, like the time that he had
taken them from the brothel to the hotel for sex.

"I felt Anubis call to me, so I came out here."

"You have a million names don't you?" Aaron asked. He knew that Spencer had never really hidden
that from him but the fact that there were so many names that Spencer had over the years, Aaron
could understand why Spencer had chosen to keep the name of Spencer Reid personally even
between them.
"Mimir and Lugh were two of my favorites. Behind that are Thoth and Seshat."

"You were Seshat?"

"Before males started to dominate the Gods, I was Seshat. Humans worship, and they give gender to that worship, and it wasn't hard to look female. I'm somewhat androgynous when I want to be. A little kohl and I can look a woman with the right top. There were a few times that I held two different ranks within the same set of deities.

"Thoth was the God of Justice. He was an incorruptible judge," Aaron said. He remembered researching him a great deal when he was a child. He had hoped that his father would maybe meet him one day. Aaron laughed a little at that right then. He wasn't sure what he thought about Spencer and his father going at it verbally. He would never want his father's taint on Spencer, even just in passing.

"Yes. I sometimes make that decision when other Gods call on me to do it. I've been known to step in and kill when it's needed. There is a reason I was drawn to his job."

"That's why with Hankel, Frank, and other people," Aaron wondered how many others Spencer's had decided were not worth living. It made Aaron think about Foyet. The man was never going to leave there alive if Aaron had a say in it. The man had proven he couldn't be contained, not safely and not for long.

"I've judged them and found them wanting. In reality, there are two versions of me within this body. There is the judge who decides those matters and the humanity that has been born of a long life living among humans. I love with all that I have to those who I fall for. When I sought and killed the God who killed Ar, it was not the human in me that did it. It was the God."

"How old is the youngest you have passed judgment on?"

"Seven. There was nothing but darkness inside of the girl's soul. What had been done to her at the hands of those who had her was horrific, and she had lost all that made her human. I granted her peace. I spent three days and nights with her, we talked and talked and talked. She attacked me when she was scared and when she felt like I wasn't paying attention. There was no way for her to live in the time that it was. There was no mental health and loving families that could try and take her in. I gave her a poison that let her go to sleep and just never wake up. I don't regret it and I never will. I could see what she would become. What damage she could do. Have you ever seen a movie called The Good Son?"

"Yes, and you don't need to explain more. When was the last time you were home?"

"Home? I don't have a home, not like you are thinking. I wasn't born of a single place, I was born of everywhere. I can't actually trace where my first memory is. Instead, I just was. While I adored Egypt better than other places, this is home, here with you. Egypt was the first place that I was happy again after your death, Aaron. I was alone for a long time, and I wandered, and I wandered. Anubis brought me to Egypt after I had been steadfast in being away from everywhere for a long time. I went there, and I didn't leave for long at all for a long time."

Spencer rolled to his front and got up to hands and knees before pushing to stand up. Aaron watched him before he stood up as well. Aaron dusted off his clothes while Spencer did the same. Spencer though was covered in a lot more but he just kind of shook himself to get the majority of it off.

"Have you ever..." Aaron trailed off and frowned. He wasn't sure how he wanted to word the question that was burning in his mind. "Have you ever felt emotion when you rendered judgment on
Spencer gave Aaron a smile and pulled him close. He pressed their forehead together and pressed a chaste kiss to Aaron's lips before turning his head back to where their noses were pressed side to side. "I'll answer the question you have very badly worded. I have never felt emotion when judging someone but when I have chosen and fulfilled that method of death I have. Once was very recent in my memory. A man who was horrible. He was going to survive his cancer and become an even worse person. He was going to make the lives of his two sons horrible, and there was a ninety-eight percent chance that he was going to kill his wife within six months. I found him severely lacking in doing anything more for the world that was of value and so I killed him. He died quickly, I would have liked to have tortured him a little, but then that wouldn't have worked because there would have been an inquiry into his death. Chemo especially back then did horrible things to the body, so it was easy to fake his death through a common cause of death for those on chemo. It was easier long ago. Men like that would have been found dead in their home, and no one would have gone in and out, and Humans would have not done a thing to anger the God who decided that it was time for him to die."

"I see. I can understand that as well." Aaron looked out at the sky and wondered at the beauty of it. "Walk with me?" Aaron asked as he held out his hand.

Spencer wrapped his hand into Aaron's, and they turned to head deeper into the desert. It was beautiful, in the dark. The moon was shining bright and lit up their path as they walked. Spencer told him names for all of the things animal and plant that they came across in a few languages.

"You speak all the time of knowing every single word that is written down. You explained it to Morgan like you live in a library and you know where things are but not always and it's hard to find a single line of text in a hundred books. Yet there are cases you steer us in directions quickly and others that take a while."

"Sometimes it's easy, and sometimes it's hard. I can't pick which."

Aaron was silent again for a while. He looked out at the horizon and saw that it was turning into day. Aaron stopped and looked at the sun as it slowly rose and the heat started.

"I see why you like the desert."

"It's the quiet at night that's not that quiet. The desert comes alive in the night, but it's not the chaos that is the forest or the Human world. The desert has its guile, but it's an honest one." Spencer tugged on Aaron's arm, pulling him toward a rock outcropping that was in the distance. Aaron followed behind like a child that needed to be guided, but he didn't care. He just liked being with Spencer like this. It was like the night that Aaron used to join him on the roofs of wherever they were at the time. Spencer shoved Aaron down onto a gouge that was in the rock and pushed him to lean back on it. It was like a recliner, a recliner made of rock but still kind of nice. Aaron wasn't sure what Spencer's plans were until he felt fingers on his zipper.

"Spencer?" Aaron asked as Spencer dropped to his knees. Aaron's eyes followed him down. The rock was at just the right height, and Aaron wasn't sure that Spencer had led them there on purpose. As soon as Aaron was free from his pants, Spencer's mouth was sliding down his cock. Aaron reached out and grabbed Spencer's hair. He tugged on it, pulling Spencer onto his cock even more. The absolute need in Spencer at that moment was palpable in the air. Aaron didn't thrust up into Spencer's mouth, but it was a near thing. He controlled Spencer's head though as Spencer moved up and down his cock. Aaron heard the sound of Spencer' belt before Spencer pulled off of Aaron's cock. Spencer's dress pants fell to the ground, and he stepped out of them and his shoes at the same time. Next was his underwear, but those were set carefully down on top of the pants and shoe pile.
His socks were tossed out into the desert.

"What if an animal eats them?"

"The only thing a desert animal is going to do with them is taking the socks back to their nest. No creature is going to try and eat them, and I am not put sandy socks back on my feet or carry them home with me."

"You and your socks." Aaron watched as Spencer climbed up onto the rock and straddled Aaron's waist. His fingers wrapped around Aaron's cock and stroked, something wet and slick that was more viscous than saliva was there. Aaron did not want to think about Spencer carrying lube around on his person while on a case much less into the damned desert. Aaron felt Spencer making sure that his cock was covered in lube before he reached behind himself with his other hand. Aaron felt the skin of Spencer's ass as Spencer lowered himself down onto Aaron's cock.

Spencer had his eyes locked with Aaron's. Aaron reached out and grabbed Spencer by the hips. When Spencer was all the way down, seated on Aaron's lap, Aaron trailed one of the hands up his side to his neck and then tangled it in his hair. Spencer's mouth dropped open, and he moaned. Aaron had started to learn his lover very well when it came to sex. Spencer didn't care what they did as long as it felt good. He allowed Aaron to direct his rocking on Aaron's cock with the hand on his hip, controlling how far up or down, how fast, and even when he was going to still on Aaron's cock. It was heady having someone like Spencer at his command. Knowing that if he wanted it, Spencer would not orgasm at all and would just deal with the frustration. Spencer knew that Aaron would make it up to him as soon as they got home. It was intoxicating at a visceral level to Aaron that Spencer didn't care about what they were doing as long as they were doing it together.

Aaron used his hand in Spencer's hair to drag him down to where they could kiss. Spencer's back was bowed, and he had to grab the rock to stop from falling over. He shuddered as the change in position changed the angle that Aaron's cock was rubbing inside of him.

There were times that Spencer was utterly silent as they had sex, Aaron had been worried at the beginning, but as it happened a few more times, Aaron got used to it. Too many emotions, Aaron assumed though he had not asked. He didn't need to, it was another quirk of Spencer that he loved. Aaron wasn't sure what had brought on this want of sex, but there were still times that Spencer was having an issue asking for intimacy that was not sex. It was dawn, and the jet would be leaving soon so there would be no cuddling in bed while waiting for that. Aaron wondered what kind of touching he could get away with on the jet as they flew home. Maybe he would sit on the couch and settle Spencer at the other end with his legs thrown over Aaron's lap. Aaron could touch at least a little skin then, and when they got home, maybe they could talk Jack into taking his nap with them in Spencer's bed. It would be nice to be able to though Jack sometimes didn't nap the greatest, but he was getting better at that.

Spencer came first with a startled cry. Aaron knew that he was going to be covered in Spencer's release, but he really didn't care. He would clean up before they left and force Spencer to do the same. The jet was entirely too small not to clean up before they got onto it. Aaron lasted through Spencer's out of sync rocking on his cock before he came. Spencer settled in on Aaron's chest, just leaning there as the sun rose just a little more on the horizon. Aaron wrapped his arms around Spencer's back to hold him close.

"Anubis is who came for you before. He won the fight to be the one to help you crossover, and he wouldn't allow me to say goodbye. I never hated him for it, but I was angry for a long time about that. You died so horrifically, and I was the one to find you just after the act was done. I wanted to tell you goodbye because I had not been able to in life."
"Maybe he knew. Knew that I would be reborn." Aaron pressed a kiss to the temple of Spencer's head, finding the skin there sweaty. Aaron didn't care though. He wrapped his arms around Spencer even tighter, not wanting to let go.

The chime of their cell phones several minutes later had both of them jumping. Spencer had to force Aaron to let go of him as Aaron didn't want to let go even though he knew that he had to. He pressed a kiss to Aaron's lips as he settled on his ass on Aaron's lap again. Spencer's fingers traced Aaron's forehead and down to his cheekbones.

"I never saw you coming into my life again. There were dark times that I thought about killing myself so that I could join you, but I knew that you would hate me for it. I'm glad now that I never did."

"I'm glad as well. Let's get going before JJ starts to call. We have to clean up before we get onto the jet."

"Yes, Sir," Spencer said with a quirk to his lips and mischief in his eyes. Aaron swatted at his hip as he slid backward off of Aaron's lap. Spencer held out his hand and Aaron slipped his hand into it. Spencer tugged Aaron up and off of the rock before he leaned down to grab his pant, underwear, and shoes. Aaron wondered why he wasn't putting them on before he blinked and when he opened his eyes again they were in their room. Aaron laughed, and he knew that Spencer would be very sedentary on the jet ride home and that was going to work with Aaron's plans so well.
From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Some humans like to feel needed; some humans need to use others. Then there are the ones that
don’t care who they use to get what they want. Those are some of the more interesting Humans that I
have come across. They are fascinating from the standpoint of learning how they tick. I like doing it,
and I would love to have a way of life that would allow me to just understand them. They are the
creatures of the world that would take the last dollar of a dying man if it meant they got to be a
dollar richer. They don’t see it as bad just that the other person doesn't need it.

Present Edit: I found that job, and I revel in it. I fight against some of the most interesting Humans
that have been created, but sometimes it's the ones that I work with that give me the most fun. I
thoroughly enjoy taking them down to what they are, weak Humans who only get where they are
because of bluster and riding backs of those they think are under them, which in their eyes is
everyone. They never expect me.

September 2010

Aaron was mired in work. He had too much to do, but he was working on getting the things done
that needed to stay inside of the building and would take the rest home to work on while Jack was
asleep, and Spencer was working on the edits his publisher had sent back to him on the next book of
his. It was not one of his memoirs because he allowed Aaron to read over his shoulder on those. This
was something else. Aaron had tried to sneak a few looks here and there, but Spencer was too good
at deflecting Aaron.

There were budget cuts to the department, some of which Aaron had already done with going down
to a single room with a single queen bed for him and Spencer but there were a few others. Aaron
would have to talk to the team about what they wanted to do as far as that went. The food budget
was going to stay the same. Having two New Gods on the team meant that they had an increased
food budget even though Aaron was not like Spencer and didn't need to eat nearly as much as his
lover did. Spencer still consumed way too much food in Aaron's eyes, but thankfully he had not
influenced Jack by just eating in front of the boy.

The salaries for Aaron and Spencer were not fully paid through the budget for the BAU, just the
standard base pay for their tenure, their degrees, and previous work history while the God bonus as
everyone called it came from the budget that was there to attract Gods to work for the FBI. The
money was stupidly not needed by Aaron. He could understand that he was given a boost because
he was like Spencer and didn’t need to sleep, but he did not need that much of a bonus. Aaron had
found a few charities to add his money to in addition to the few that he already donated to. Spencer
though forced him to keep a good bit of it as a nest egg. Aaron wasn't sure that he wanted to know
what Spencer’s nest egg was given that he allowed college students to stay in his building rent-free.
Aaron was also pretty damned sure that Jin and Petal didn’t pay rent either and that the food added to
Spencer's tab was just never paid. The mechanics of the relationships that Spencer had created with
those in the building were interesting. Even the new kids that came to stay in the apartment were all
little quirky in their own right.

The newest kid was named Kyle, and he was high functioning but Autistic. He did not work at the
restaurant like the other boys in the apartment, but he did help Jin and Petal with their computer and
other technology that they had, including upgrading them. The kid was a computer genius, and
Aaron was pretty damned sure that as soon as he graduated one of the big tech companies was going to snatch him up if they had not already. Aaron knew that he came from a broken home and then was given up as the father couldn't deal with him anymore. Aaron liked talking to him about TV shows as Kyle had the TV going all the time in his room.

"Hotch?" Anderson asked as he stopped at the doorway to Aaron's office. He looked a little uneasy, but Aaron knew that it was not because of Aaron but because of whatever errand he had been sent on.

"Yes, Anderson?"

"I was asked to tell you that you are requested in a meeting in DC, as soon as you get there. I was told that as soon as you arrived at the Hoover building, you would be escorted to where you need to go."

"Do you know why I wasn't called about this?" Aaron asked.

"Well...No. Reid is the one who asked me to get you though. He sounded really upset about something and said that if he called more than one person he might go on a rampage. I have my own duties to do."

Aaron narrowed his eyes at Anderson but nodded his head. Aaron knew that Anderson had taken on some of JJ's duties over the last few months with her wanting to spend more time with Henry and Will and moving along at that relationship at a more sedate pace now that they were married. Anderson had never asked for more duties, but he took them on when someone asked. Aaron had asked Spencer to keep an eye and make sure that Anderson was not being taken advantage of. For Spencer to be using him for something that Anderson was keeping quiet meant that Spencer deemed it necessary.

"Tell the team that I'll be back, hopefully before the end of the day."

"Yes, Sir." Anderson nodded his head and walked away from the doorway.

Aaron grabbed his suit jacket and put it on. It wasn't cold outside by any stretch, but Aaron wasn't going to arrive at the Hoover building without looking impeccable. He stopped by the bathroom, and double checked his hair. It was perfectly arranged like always. Well, at least when Spencer had not got his fingers into it. Which he did a lot when they were on lunch break.

The drive to DC proper was filled with Aaron worried about what was going on. Spencer while a good agent did not have the clout needed to bring a meeting like this on short notice unless it was something horrible and possibly very damaging to a career if Spencer was the one that called the meeting. If Spencer was not, then why was Spencer passing on the message and Aaron had not been called. Aaron wasn't sure what was going on, and he knew that worrying about it wasn't going to help. He stopped and picked up a burrito at one of the places that he would never have stopped and got food from, but Spencer loved their burritos, so there was usually a midnight snack from there at least once a week.

Aaron stayed in the car to finish off the burrito. He had not planned on eating out for lunch as he had a really good meal in the fridge at Quantico for him. Spencer had spent the evening before cooking and refilling the fridge and freezer with easy meals for them to cook and for Jack to eat. Sheila liked that as she didn't have to worry about cooking for Jack when the boy was picky about eating, he had never refused anything that Spencer made. Even if there was something in it that Jack didn't like that well.
Getting out of his car, Aaron grabbed his briefcase and started for the agent entrance on the building. He saw a very worried looking young man standing and looking around. Aaron started for him because it was a pretty slim chance that the man wasn't looking for him.

"Agent Hotchner?" the young man asked.

"Yes."

"Oh thank the Gods. Please come with me." The young man dashed for the door and Aaron hoped that this man grew into the patience needed for an agent. Aaron followed the man through the building, up the elevator, and down a few halls before he was shown to a conference room that was on the small side. Aaron saw that there were just seats instead of the normal table with chairs all around it. Aaron frowned as it was empty. He turned to ask the young man where everyone was when a second door opened and the Director of the FBI entered.

"Hotch," the Director said.

"Sir," Aaron said back. He held out his hand as the Director stepped up to him. Aaron shook his hand, and when the Director waved his hand, Aaron took a seat.

"Thank you for rushing here. A situation has been brought to my attention, and I don't like it. So we thought that it was best to just nip it in the bud now before it got too bad."

"Who is we, Sir? The agent that gave me word that I was to come here was not given much information."

"Not shocked," Richmond said behind Aaron. Aaron turned to look at him and started to get up, but the man waved at him to stay seated "Agent Reid is usually light on facts when he's upset and let me tell you boys, he is pissed at the moment. The last three people joining us will be here in a few minutes. The Secretary of State just arrived."

Aaron frowned internally because he had no reasoning of why the Secretary of State would be brought into a meeting with Aaron and Spencer, the Director of the FBI, and Richmond. Nothing was making sense, and Aaron was going to get every single word of the truth from Spencer before the end of the day.

A minute later the door opened, and a woman entered with a tray of mugs and two carafes on it. She set it down the coffee table that was in the middle of the chairs and left again without a word.

"My assistant is out sick. He caught that damned flu that's going around. So I'm borrowing someone else for the day," Richmond said. He grabbed one of the cups and filled it with coffee before handing it to Aaron. He did the same for the next cups, filling each with different amounts of cream and sugar before handing one up above him. Aaron watched as Spencer's fingers closed around the cup. Aaron gave Spencer a nod of the head before Spencer sat down. JJ was with Spencer as well as the Secretary of State. Aaron frowned because the Secretary did not look happy.

"I was in the middle of the golf course," the Secretary said as he sat down and picked up a cup of coffee. He took a sip and nodded his head. "You still make damned good coffee."

"Thanks. I like to do at least some things good. Coffee is my damned right, and I'm gonna do it well."

"So what exactly is this meeting about?" The Secretary asked as he cracked a smile at Richmond's words.
Richmond and the Director looked at Spencer, and the Secretary did too when he realized that they were not going to talk.

"Consent. Consent is a good thing to talk about," Spencer said.

"Consent?" The Secretary asked. He looked really confused and well Aaron was as well, but no one else looked confused at all. In fact, even JJ looked very upset almost more upset than the Director and Richmond looked. Aaron kept his face neutral.

"Consent is a thing that everyone should ask for before they do anything. And when someone tells you no, you should respect them saying no and not do the thing."

"I'm very confused about all of this, Richmond. This is one of yours, well technically two of yours but I've known Hotch long enough to tell that he's keeping a straight face but is just as confused as I am."

"Someone in your division is trying to recruit our media liaison to their secret mission that has nothing to do with media or liaising with media."

"And why are you handling this and not Hotch?"

"Because with JJ turning it down, it's gone above to our Section Chief. Our Section Chief is very new and was upset that your person is not taking no for an answer and then when he kicked it up, it was found out to be a New God that works in your department. So I chose to handle this as I am the senior God on the team."

The Secretary looked at Hotch like he was expecting him to step in and say something about Spencer not including him in it, but Aaron had been steadfast in the fact that he would defer to Spencer in all things God-related as he was still just a newling when it came to those things. Aaron just raised an eyebrow.

"Sorry, Hotch. I was pulled into a meeting, and things just spiraled."

"I'm the one that made the decision to call this meeting," Richmond said. He glared at the Secretary of State with a harshness to it that made Aaron feel like a little kid. Aaron frowned at the Secretary. The look on Spencer's face was just anger.

"You are a God, what the hell do you care about free will and consent?" The Secretary asked.

"Do you know what they say I am the God of?" Spencer asked.

"No."

"Psychology. I'm all for consent and free will. I'm all for someone having their own damned agency to decide what they want to do with their life. I don't like someone coming in and trying to take my friends and take them to the Middle East and have them do something they are not trained to do."

The Secretary paled at Spencer's words. He looked at JJ and then at the Director and finally back at Spencer.

"And how do you know the details of what she's being wanted at the State Department for?"

"I have friends in high places, it's the nature of what I am. I have a kinship with other Gods. Things like this there is a little leeway in what we can spill, and it's written into our contracts. Think of it like a soldier refusing an immoral order. If I were to tell someone about something and it not be on the up
and up and have a good reason, I could be thrown in jail for the rest of my life. Not something I want to mess around with. I'm an Immortal for all intents and purposes. That's not a way I want to spend eternity, jail is not for me. I really don't think that jail is good for anyone really. Though some do well in prison with the structure. Do you think that you would do well in prison?"

"Hey!" The Secretary of State said.

"That was not a threat it was just a question. I'm a psychologist. I finally finished my paperwork for that. I can actually diagnose and treat people now. Isn't that fun? I don't want to, but still. Now please answer my question."

"No, I don't think I would do well in prison."

"Then why should someone be forced into a job that they don't want because someone thinks that because she is on a team with profilers that she can actually do our damned job? She handles the media and a little bit of talking with victim's families."

The Secretary looked at Spencer like he was shocked. It was a very roundabout of going to what Spencer was driving home, but then Aaron knew that even his mind didn't keep up with Spencer all that well even on his best day. The Secretary of State had not talked with Spencer at all before this. It was interesting to see the man following Spencer's logic.

"I know the mission, and I don't understand why she is being brought in on it as well. You have my word that I'll figure it out. Though I wonder if it's because she is a woman. Is there someone else on the team that might be able to go in her place?"

"Prentiss would not be good for whatever it is. And if a woman is needed then no, there are no other members on our team."

"Miss Jareau, don't worry about the forced transfer, it's not going to happen, today or tomorrow. I'll make sure that everyone under my control does not bother your team anymore."

"And?" Spencer asked.

"Learns what consent means." The Secretary looked very upset about even having to say that.

"Good." The Director stood up as he spoke and nodded at JJ and the Secretary before waving the two of them out with him. Aaron looked at Richmond, and he looked at Spencer.

"What happened?" Aaron asked.

"JJ came to me upset. She knows that I have a fellow God friend at the State Department and wanted to know what was up with the forced transfer that she was being threatened with. She did not understand why they wanted someone like her for anything. Her skill set is very limited. So today I went to visit my friend. He was one of the analysts for the mission and told me that it wasn't anything that JJ needed to be doing. I still don't understand exactly what they want with her, but It's not anything good. So I called Richmond, and he looked into it. Someone above our new Section Chief and below the highest we answer to that's not the Director decided that it would look good for them that JJ does this. I took offense, and so did Richmond, so it went up to the Director. I was dealing with a few things to do with this and did not have time to talk to you."

"Even though JJ is not one of mine," Richmond said after he drained the coffee in his cup. He handed over the second carafe to Spencer and set his cup down. "I am going to make sure that she isn't hurt over this. She went to Reid for help, and he is the one that escalated it, though he is about the only one that could escalate it like this."
"I knew how to handle it. She's good at helping, but she is not a profiler. If she were sent overseas for anything, she would probably come back in a body bag. I won't see that happen to my friend."

Richmond nodded at Spencer's words and stood up. "You have the room the rest of the day if you want. Please, no sex."

Aaron tried to hold back the blush at the man's words but could not. He frowned as Spencer laughed. The door was shut with purpose when Richmond went through it Aaron was about to open his mouth when the door opened again. JJ ran inside hugged Spencer tightly for at least a minute while Spencer floundered a little then patted her on the back. She was gone just seconds after letting him go, shutting the door behind her. Aaron was a little shocked at that because Spencer still didn't like being touched that much outside of Aaron and Jack. Aaron frowned at him for a second as he put his thoughts together.

"What do you know of the mission?" Aaron asked.

"They wanted her to get information about activities and shit from the wife of someone important to the war. It's not hard for me to narrow my focus to things that are recent and with her being pushed and pushed to take the job, I knew that it was only a matter of time before they tried something like this." Spencer opened the carafe that Richmond had given him and poured out another cup of coffee. Aaron smelled it before Spencer had even lifted it up to drink. It looked already made with cream in it and smelled like heaven. "This is his good coffee. I have liked it a lot the few times that I've gone to his office to discuss things. He likes to indulge me."

"Does he know who you are?"

"That I'm an Old God? Yes. That I am Mimir? No. He's asked to not be told exactly who I am. He guessed that I was not a New God when he met me after Gideon found me. You asked me once if there was a reason beyond Gideon on why I joined the team. I told you yes and that I was not ready to discuss it with you. I was put on there because Richmond knew that someone on your team was becoming a New God. He wanted to make sure that someone was in place to handle it because Gideon was not the best at handling those things. Richmond was afraid of what that person would be forced to endure if there was no one on the team to help them. The BAU puts on a very united front to the world."

"So you were a plant?"

"No. Gideon wanted me, Richmond just made sure that I got onto the team. It was well known at the Academy that I had a steel spine so to speak. I had a few try and get me to help them cheat on the tests for the academic side. Instead, I just reported them and got them thrown out. There were a few that were not happy, but they learned to not go to me with anything that was not above board. I would help them study, and in return, I asked for help with my physical stuff. It had been a little bit since I had used a lot of the hand to hand and such. I tried not to stand out too much given my supposed past. Though Spencer being friends with the basketball team was good. He helped them with things, and they protected him. Showed him how to throw a punch correctly in college."

"That placement slipped past me."

"You redeemed yourself by figuring out Prentiss before I got to tell you. Strauss was pretty opaque with that one. JJ asked me about this yesterday, and today it just kind of blew up a great deal."

"I can tell." Aaron stood up. He knew that he had been at the meeting as a figurehead as it was all going to happen above his head. He would have to have a meeting with the new Section Chief, who had been in place for two weeks. The hunt had been long, longer than Aaron wanted. It was all
down to the fact that there was more than one God inside of the BAU. Aaron knew that it was going
to be hard going forward with the most experience to find someone else that would do it. Aaron
wondered if it would just be in the FBI's interests to just get them a God for a Section Chief and call
it done.

"How is Cruz settling in?" Spencer asked as he offered Aaron his cup of coffee.

Aaron took a sip of the coffee before answering. "He's happy to have a desk job and is looking
forward to joining us on a case soon. He's not had a lot of experience with a team like this, but he's
willing to learn and doesn't seem upset about us at all though he is transferring from a unit that had
two New Gods on it. It was a mainly analysis based, but I think that will do good for us."

"I saw you two talking when he was brought in for the interview with all of the Unit Chiefs. He
seemed to get along with everyone, including Garrett but then that man gets along with everyone."

"I wanted the interview to be like that because I needed to play them off of each other while making
sure that the other Unit Chiefs had a say in the person leading them. Because I was not stepping up
or leaving, me being here was part of the reason we were not getting some of the Chiefs that I
thought would do the best."

"Just like when Rossi came to the team, no one else wanted to be with you or with me. You are a
very scary man."

Aaron laughed because he had never scared Spencer and really that should have been Aaron's first
clue that Spencer was not a New God. Aaron scared nearly everyone a little bit when they first met
him. It was his serious nature and his demand for perfection.

"What is going to happen when it's found out that you are not a New God? Seriously?"

"Nothing really. I promise that they can't do a damned thing to me. I covered my ass, and Richmond
covered my ass and his own. It's all be very heavily covered. Morgan is the only person that I worry
about but given that I am a God of Knowledge, there is little that I could have really done other than
killing the man who made Morgan distrust Gods, and I might still do that. He's a horrible waste of
space human."

"We can agree on that. So are we done here? Can we go home?"

"Yes, Anderson is gonna drop off things we left at the office. I'm worn out from stress, and I just
wanna relax and watch TV. We can give Sheila the afternoon off. You can work on paperwork until
you are sick of it and then play with Jack and me."

Aaron smiled and nodded his head. He would work on paperwork in his comfortable clothes with
his feet on the coffee table and at a few points Jack crawling on him wanting attention from him. It
wasn't a life he had ever seen for himself, and it wasn't a life that Aaron had ever wished he could
have, but he was damned happy with it.
Chapter 23

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

There are Gods out there who do not try and hide among the Humans, there are Gods who would rather have the worship they used to have then the silent worship that the rest of us survive on. They want the pomp. They want the circumstance. They want everything. Then there are the utterly stupid Humans who do not understand what they have become and they become points that need to be taken care of. Sometimes it's the Humans who take care of them, and sometimes it's a God. Then there are the ones that the Gods band together to take care of. That's the points in time when it's very evident to the rest of the Humans that something terrible is going on. Thankfully as Humans evolve, they try to not think about us Gods. They would rather believe in science and in fact. For Gods like me and for Jax, that makes us worshiped all the more. Adapt or die was the motto we carried throughout the years from when Humans came out of the caves to when they developed modern things. It's the only motto that Gods need.

However, when New Gods adapt without understanding what they are, it's chaos for everyone around them.

January 2011

Aaron looked at Spencer again as did the rest of the team. It was a little scary for them to actually see Spencer kill someone without using a weapon other than his mind. Spencer was still crouched on the floor of the abandoned house that they were in. He was breathing, Aaron knew that, but he had not moved other than that since he had killed the professor.

"Hotch?" Morgan asked.

"I don't know what happened," Aaron said because he didn't. He didn't think that Spencer could do things like that. He was a God of Knowledge, to the team of Psychology. There was nothing in Aaron's understanding of what Spencer was able to do that told him what happened there. Julio was still on the floor, bound but his eyes were locked on Spencer. Aaron holstered his gun and stepped over to release him. Aaron had heard Professor Hollis Walker Jr.'s confession of everything that he did. It was interesting to listen to the man spout such religious fanatic things that he had done only to get the attention of his father.

"You protected me," Julio said as he crouched in front of Spencer.

Spencer looked up at him, and Aaron saw the light burning in Spencer's eyes. That was always interesting to see, and it was one of the first time that the team had ever been granted the sight of it. Aaron looked at the rest of them and saw that all looked calm despite everything. None of them had their guns out anymore, and actually, Dave looked pretty damned calm. He reached into his back pocket and drew out one of Spencer's favorite candy bars. It wasn't available in DC, but Aaron had seen it at a shop that they had stopped at to get chapstick with sunblock as JJ had been out and didn't want to burn her lips. Dave must have grabbed a few to give to Spencer when he was hungry, and there wasn't a lot of other things on hand. Aaron had not seen him do it so it couldn't have been that many bars.

"Here," Dave said as he stepped up to Julio and stayed back enough to not spook either of them. Julio took the bar and handed to Spencer.
It looked like it was rote that made Spencer unwrap the bar and take a bite. He frowned and then broke the bar in half, handing the other half to Julio.

"I'm not that kind of New God," Julio said. He pushed the bar back to Spencer.

Aaron saw that Spencer had devoured the half of the bar in the time that it took for him to offer it to Julio and the man to refuse.

"So what kind of God are you?"

"My ability to be an actual God was destroyed, but I allow the Gods to inhabit me when they need. I do not know if they are New or Old but they are mine and I allow them to do what they need to me." Julio was gentle as he reached up and touched the side of Spencer's face with two fingers. "I did not realize that you were a God when we met. I thought that you were like me. I am sorry for whatever pain I gave you."

"You did not give me pain it was Walker. His crimes and his inability to control or want to control his power. I don't know if he truly did not know that he had become a New God or not but he was very clingy and needy and his power is what gave me the headaches. You actually help." Spencer raised up his arm to show the bracelet that he was still wearing. He smiled at it. "At least one of your Gods is an Old God. This is their type of magic."

"Then it was good that I gave it to you?" Julio asked, and he looked like a child who was wanting approval from their parent.

"Yes. It was very good." Spencer paused to eat the last of the bar and Dave handed over another to Julio.

Aaron thought that it was some kind of miracle that no one on the team had started to ask questions. The sound of feet behind him had Aaron turning to look at the men who were coming up behind them. The backup that Aaron had called for to take the suspect in. "In here."

"Sir, we got reports of a light show as well. Is that you or do you need a few of us to look into that?" the lead officer asked as he stopped right beside Aaron and looked at Julio and Spencer.

"That was us. Julio needs to be taken in and his statement given. He's to be treated with respect and released when he is done. His congregation will want to know that he is safe."

"Yes, Sir," the officer stepped up to Julio to wait for him to get up.

Spencer looked at Julio with a fond smile on his face. As he did, Julio's demeanor changed, and Aaron had a feeling that he was no Julio anymore.

"Heard whispers of you, child," Julio said, but this tone was soft, almost feminine. His hand reached out, and his fingertips brushed over Spencer's forehead and then down beside his eyes and down to his cheek. "Heard a lot of whispers."

"Yes, Ma'am."

"The good you've done. The man you've found. Keep on."

"Yes, Ma'am."

Julio stood up and when Aaron looked at his face it was just him on his face. Aaron wondered which God had gone into him and if Spencer knew exactly which one it was as well.
The officers escorted Julio out, and they were left with the fact that there was nothing left of the New God who had wreaked havoc all over the area.

"Can you explain?" JJ asked as she stepped up to stand near Spencer. Spencer looked up like he was seeing the team for the first time. He started to get up but his legs tried to give out on him, and he crashed down to his knees again. Morgan and Dave stepped up to him and got him up. Dave had a power bar in his hand, and Aaron wondered precisely where the man was getting the food until he saw that there was a bag in Prentiss's hand. It must have been in the SUV and when they had realized what was going on one of them ran back for it.

"I can but not right now. I need to get sat down and not move for a while. I figure that I can be set down in front of a computer and I type up my statement while you guys are doing everything else that you need to do. I'll just need help to get to and from. Maybe on the jet, we can talk?" Spencer looked at everyone but Aaron as he asked that question.

Aaron watched as the team all nodded their heads. Spencer wrapped his arm across Morgan's shoulder, and Dave let go of him. Spencer looked like he was steady on his feet. Aaron didn't want Morgan to go away, but someone had to take Spencer to the station that could help half carry him inside. Aaron wanted to stay where he was and work on the case. There was evidence here. They needed everything to make sure that no one could come back at a later point and decide that Spencer's kill of the man was not justified.

"I'll take you back to the station Reid," Prentiss said as she switched the bag to her other hand as Morgan and Spencer passed by her. She looked at Aaron and waited for him to nod before she followed them out. Aaron could see Spencer raising up his arm to take bites of the power bar as they walked.

"He showed signs of hunger on the case but also seemed like he couldn't eat," Dave said as he looked at where the trio was making their way out of the house. "So I thought that some food on hand was a good idea. I saw the chocolate he liked, and JJ made sure the extra stock was pulled from the jet for his bars. I still don't understand how he can eat those."

"Just think about before now, how he would have had to have eaten before modern society and food was available outside of a kitchen. I don't know how any of the Gods lived. I know that he said he doesn't have to eat but that hunger, that need for that, it would have driven me insane. I don't eat near as much as him, but then I don't think that I take up as much power as he does Psychology is pretty large."

"I've seen you pack away the carbs though, so don't act like you don't. You've eaten more pasta in the last year than I have think I have seen you eat in the years I've known you."

"That because they don't mess with me like they used to. I run now because I like it. Not because I need it to stay healthy. Though I don't know if it will always be like that or it's because I am settling. Still, I like that I can eat without worrying now."

"No, it just got changed with another worry. Why don't you step outside and make the call to Cruz to make sure that he's aware of what happened?"

Aaron looked at Dave and wondered why he wanted Aaron out of the room. Aaron did as he asked though. The call was quick, and then it was back to collecting the evidence that they needed about the house. They found another room that was packed with the items that Walker used to commit the murders as well as his research notes. Aaron would make sure that two of them went to his office and made copies and whatnot of everything that was found.
It was over a day before they could leave and in that time Spencer's headache didn't get much better, but it didn't get worse. Aaron was still worried about the headache, but Spencer kept on pushing him off. He followed the rest of the team onto the jet. Prentiss had brought Spencer onto it before the rest of the team had left the station house where they were working out of. Julio had stayed and talked to Spencer after he had been there, in fact, Julio had basically become Spencer's errand boy when it came to food, Aaron, as well as Spencer, always asked for things that Aaron liked as well. Julio was very interested in Spencer's story, and Aaron was not sure that Spencer hadn't told him who he really was.

Aaron stepped up onto the jet and found that Julio was on there. Prentiss was seated in a corner spot while Spencer and Julio were on the couch. They were talking low, and Julio was the first to look up at him. Julio stood up and bowed his head at Aaron before walking off of the jet. Aaron turned back to see that a cab was waiting at the edge of the tarmac, something that was rare as hell. Aaron looked at Spencer and saw that he was leaning back on the couch with his head resting on the back. His eyes were closed, and Aaron wondered how long it would take for him to recover from what had been done to Walker.

"I'll go and help the others," Prentiss said.

Aaron frowned as Prentiss slipped off of the jet.

"Is there something we need to talk about?" Aaron asked. Spencer shook his head.

"No, we do," Dave said as he stepped up behind Aaron. He looked back out at the team, and Aaron saw them milling around the SUVs. They were making no effort to come up onto the jet. "Sit."

Aaron walked over to sit down beside Spencer on the couch, between Dave and Spencer.

"You know you've always done that," Dave said as he settled against the table across from the couch, leaning against it and not sitting down. "You've always protected him, and I have to wonder why."

"You know that his start on this team was shaky," Aaron said.

"Yes, well I want to know how Gideon never figured out what he was."

"What do you think I am, Rossi?" Spencer asked, tipping his head down to actually look at the man.

"I thought for a while you were a New God who had taken over Spencer Reid's life when he died but then this today, I knew that I was wrong. Smiting is something that only Old Gods do, they are the only ones who can. I remember that well from what little the Old Gods shared with us. So exactly who are you and why did you kill Spencer Reid?"

"I did not kill him. I did as you said, I took over his life after he died. Slotted myself into what he looked like and destroyed his body. The only person that would have actually missed him had died in the accident as well. I felt no guilt for that. He would have been someone who changed the face of psychology as we knew it. He was murdered by those who seek to murder all New Gods, and I could not make it to him in time to save him. I had been keeping an eye on him to do just that, but someone knew that I was there."

"Who are you?"

"You have no guess? You've studied the Old Gods more than almost any other Agent out there, and you've talked with all but one who had come out. So Agent Rossi, knowing that, who am I?" Spencer leaned forward and looked Dave in the eye.
"You are either that one God that I have never met or you are one that has never stepped up. The FBI has no stance on forcing Gods, New or Old, to come out but we do have a list of all Old Gods who have come out, even if it's just by letter. We are still trying to figure out who Mimir is. His publishing house guards his identity very well, and his money goes to a bank offshore that has accounts for Old Gods that are protected well as well. We can't trace a damn bit of it."

"I would hope not." Spencer reached into the bag at his side and pulled out a tablet that Aaron had never seen before. He handed it over to Dave.

Aaron watched as Dave unlocked it and then frowned at Spencer.

"First seven digits of Pi," Spencer said, and then his glare deepened he recited those digits.

The look on Dave's face was startled, and that was a look that Aaron rarely ever saw in him. In fact, Aaron was pretty damned sure that he had not seen it that way on his face before. Aaron was about ninety-five percent sure that the look on Dave's face was because he was looking at a manuscript for the next Mimir volume.

"Fuck me," Dave said and looked up at Aaron before looking back down at the table and then back at Spencer. He looked like a light breeze could knock him over. "Who knows?"

"Inside of the FBI, only Richmond knows exactly who I am. It's not on a file anywhere. Gideon saw what he wanted to see, a New God that he could take under his wing and turn into his replacement. He never saw me as more than an innocent little lamb that he could shape. That is why he never saw the fact that after Bale he was not ready to come back. He saw me not bending over backward to get him back as a betrayal. I told him that my help on topics would only come based on what I thought. Even he did not fully understand the difference between Humans and Gods. We can turn off emotion and evaluate solely on logic. Hell, I could make Spock look like a purely illogical creature."

"And yet-" Dave stopped and looked at Aaron.

"We all need an outlet and sex is a lot of fun."

"Spencer," Aaron said. It was sharp, but Spencer just grinned at him.

"That's what it started out as. Aaron didn't like me going to a brothel for a blowjob, so he offered."

Aaron closed his eyes because he was never going to live that down from Dave. He didn't really want to look at the man right now, but he was going to have to. He opened his eyes and turned in the seat to where he was facing forward again. Dave was looking at Aaron like he didn't know him all that way.

"Though long before we ever fell into bed together, there was something there. Even with my age, I can be surprised. We all have blinders of some kind, and Aaron was in mine. What do you remember of that telephone interview you did with me not long after the BSU started to be the ones to look into the Gods in their various forms?"

"You said that you had only loved one person in your long life and you would never love again."

"Yeah, prophetic words it seems. I never used to believe in reincarnation. I mean there were Humans that feel the same to me but never exactly the same. You've never asked about the night that Aaron became a New God. Why I was so pale. Aaron didn't let it go, and I'm still not sure that he believed the bullshit that I fed him about it."

"Why were you pale? I just assumed it was an effect of Aaron becoming a God in that instant."
"Gods feel different than Humans. I can walk into a room and know exactly what every single person is, from Human to New God to Old God. My great love had been reborn in that instant in the man I was using for sex. Sex only happens on cases and never in our apartments. I knew that Aaron was getting fed up about that, but he never said a thing. It was going to be soon, and then Foyet happened. Foyet figured out that I was an Old God but not which one. I killed him for threatening my love, and I would do it again. He entered a place that he knew he was going to be killed in if he couldn't kill first."

"Aaron's the same God?"

"The Godly powers that he has, yes. He feels exactly the same. He does not look the same. He didn't feel like him at all."

"What was his name? You never said that."

"His name is mostly lost to time. His name was Ar though. Which believe me I laughed at when I settled down."

"How are you going to explain what happened to Walker?"

"Julio is a human who can allow themselves to be taken over by a God. He's already taking the blame for smiting Walker. That's in his report. That the God who had taken him over while he was bound had allowed him to do that. That is nothing that says that I did it, but the God did take part of my power, forcing it out of me to allow them to do a smiting from a distance. There is no person alive that could get the truth of if that could happen or not from a New God or an Old God. So I'm safe on that front. The question remains that I need to know if you are a threat to me."

"Oh, hell no. I might be a lapsed Catholic but I know well enough the power of a pissed off God, and I don't wish to make the oldest alive mad at me. I'll just keep my words to myself and write up my report based on what you say. I'm sure that you'll go over it with the team. None of them are going to like finding out that you are an Old God."

"And I'll handle that when the time comes and not a moment before. So go ahead and tell the rest of the team that they can come in and you've finished boxing my ears for being stupid enough to go into a place like that without backup." Spencer smiled at Dave before he closed his eyes and turned to lay down on Aaron. Aaron wrapped his arm around him and smiled as he did. Dave laughed and walked to the doorway to wave the rest of the team up. Aaron actually felt Spencer slip into sleep and he knew that he would be like dead weight on him the entire flight home, but he was okay with that because if him sleeping meant he was rebuilding the magic that he had that allowed him to defend himself like that, he could live with that."

Aaron listened to Jack running around in the apartment below. The vents did not do a lot to block that sound as it traveled through the heating and cooling systems in the apartments. Aaron had just got out of the shower. It had taken them a long while to smooth things over with the higher-ups and to train Cruz on what precisely the case file said happened. Aaron knew that Richmond probably knew exactly what happened. Aaron had not asked Spencer about that.

Dressing slowly, Aaron looked around his room and realized that while he had some things in there, there was not a lot. Most of his things were in Spencer's apartment. Aaron listened again to Jack's soft talking carrying through the ducts, meaning that he had to be near one. The sounds were comforting in a way that Aaron had never thought they would be. He had wanted kids for a very long time, but it was only getting married to Haley that had made him see that he could be a father and not be like his own father. Haley had not shown the fact that she didn't want a kid until right
there at the end after they already had Jack. Aaron had just thought that they were unlucky. It had been devastating that Haley had killed so many kids. Aaron would have married her if he had known that she didn't want kids. That had been something that Aaron had wanted but never let himself think he could really have. He had married with the thought of having them though.

Aaron never would have made it through everything that had happened with Haley if it had not been for Spencer. Aaron was staring at himself in the mirror in the bathroom as he worked on his hair, getting it to lay down the way that he wanted. He was overdue for a haircut and needed to make the time for one. Aaron wondered precisely what they would do if they did go through with making Aaron and Spencer's apartment a condo like place. Aaron could see keeping Spencer's kitchen because it was much better than Aaron's in the way of layout and such. It was also on the lower floor. Aaron's apartment would become the bedrooms and maybe even an office or library. Aaron kind of liked the library on the second floor with turning maybe Spencer's bedroom into an office. The living room could be expanded into the other bedroom. Or make it a dining room instead of having the island as the only place to eat. Aaron was also thinking Jack and school work later on. Aaron had done most of his work at a desk in his room, but he had wanted to do it at the table in the dining room as he heard a lot of other kids talk about. He wasn't sure if that was a thing that other kids did anymore, but it was something nice.

Jack was still at the age where his homework was done quickly usually right after school was done. It was simple writing things and simple addition and subtraction. Jack liked his school, after kindergarten that he did not like at public school, Spencer had found an excellent private school not far from where they were living. New Haven Academy used to be in Dumfries but had moved to DC proper after a few issues and need more protection than the little city could give them after attacks when a few teachers had been targeted as part of an ongoing campaign against anyone who was not straight. The Academy had been two years to build, and when it had opened on a vast tract of land that used to be a warehouse, Aaron had been happy that Jack had got in. While they were able to boast a larger student population with the new separate housing for the kids so they could be away from the school itself but still be on the same land. It was still a pretty strict intake on the kids, and it seemed that Jack got accepted based on the very lax IQ test they did with him. Aaron hadn't even realized that it was one until it was over. Aaron figured that all of that had to do with Spencer and him stepping in with Jack when he was younger.

Deciding that his hair was as good as it was going to get, Aaron turned to leave. He grabbed his book from the nightstand where he had placed it after accidentally carrying it into the bedroom after getting home. He threw it on top of the bag he had packed and settled in the living room to take down to Spencer's.

"Hotch," Peaches said as he appeared on top of a light on the chandelier in the living room. "There is something here."

"What?" Aaron looked around, and then he saw Stormy was in the corner. Aaron crouched and held out his fingers. Stormy came running.

"Just stupid Stormy. I think I'll stay up here today. Mister Spencer gave me treats, and I don't wanna play with Stormy today." Peaches stuck his tongue out at Stormy and blew a raspberry at her. Stormy barked at him, it was almost like a dog. Stormy liked to stay at Aaron's as that was where Jack was most of the time, but when they were all there, Stormy liked to be where Aaron was. That was confusing as Aaron was pretty sure that she was Jack's created pet. Though Aaron was sure that it was Stormy just getting sick of being around Jack a lot of the time, so she latched onto her second favorite Human.

Aaron was grabbing his bag and letting Stormy climb him like a tree when a thought hit him. It did
not matter what they were saying, Aaron and Spencer had been raising Jack as an almost-couple for years. Jack might call Spencer Pen and Aaron Daddy, but Spencer was just as much a father to him as Aaron was. Spencer's first thoughts had always been for Jack. Aaron wondered if over the years of his long life if Spencer had filled the hole that Ar had made with other kids. Spencer had been too damned good with Jack and Aaron had kind of forgot about that in the rush of Foyet.

"Well, Stormy, I guess maybe it's time to just do what we need to do to become a real family huh?" Aaron asked as he stepped out of the apartment. He didn't lock his door, just like Spencer. Peaches would slip down if someone came knocking. "Wonder what Spencer would do if I tried to make an honest man out of him someday?"

Aaron laughed at his own words because he kind of wanted to see Spencer's face if he proposed marriage to him. There were places where it was legal for Gods to marry and there were places where same-sex marriages were allowed no matter what sex someone was. Aaron wasn't ready for that step, no matter the pull to Spencer that he had. He just wasn't ready for marriage. His last had left a mark on him that he wasn't sure really was fully healed yet. Haley had left a number on him, but there wasn't that issue with Spencer. Spencer had waited a very long time for Aaron. He had waited too long some would say for the love of his long life to come back, but still, the thought of marriage wasn't anathema to Aaron, just not yet.

The door to Spencer's apartment was open as Aaron got down to it. He found that Jack was flopped on the floor and was staring up at something. Aaron walked over to see what he was staring at. It was a shape on the ceiling that kept on moving. It was like a kaleidoscope but magic it seemed. He smelled something really good and turned to see that Spencer was at the stove cooking. That meant that Ri was entertaining Jack while Spencer was cooking. It was a regular occurrence.

"So I was thinking," Aaron said as he dropped his bag on the couch to take care of later. Stormy jumped off of his shoulder and rushed to cuddle with Jack.

"I hope that you never stop," Spencer said. He turned his head to where Aaron could see the smile on his face. "But please go on."

"Living in two places is kind of dumb," Aaron said.

"I agree, but I'm not moving out of my apartment of this building."

"What about temporarily?" Aaron walked over to the island and sat down at the end, where he could see Spencer and Spencer could see him without turning around all the way. "We stay in mine while they do some work down here then move out to a hotel that's magic friendly until they are done working on the upstairs. Make this place a condo of sorts. Bedrooms upstairs and living areas down here."

"Been thinking about this long?" Spencer asked. He finished stirring whatever he had just dropped down into the pan and turned to look at Aaron, leaning against the counter beside the sink.

"I kind of have. It's been off and on and upstairs just now a lot. It makes sense."

"And that's why you want to do it? Logie?" Spencer's face was unreadable.

"No, I want it as well. It would be nice to have my things in one place, and I like waking up with you in bed, and I want to do it for a long time. As long as the world exists."

"That actually sounds a little romantic. Who knew you would be the romantic one. Find a contractor to do it, and we can work on all the little details before they do a single thing to the place. Jin and
Petal will let me cook down there while we live up in the bedroom area. We can have them work up there first, and then we live in the bedrooms and eat in the library or what else goes up there. If it gets too bad, then we can move to a hotel while they work down here. It shouldn't be that long to get a set of steps built up to the upstairs. I like this. Let's do it."

Aaron smiled, getting up to seal the deal with a kiss. Now it was just finding someone to do it all. To turn this place into a haven for the little family they had.
From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

There are some Gods who revel in the chaos that they can wreak all over everything. They try and do the most damage that they can. The magic that chooses who becomes a God does not always choose well at all. There are a lot of people that I have come across in my long life that I would never want to see become a God, and yet some of them do. However, the saying that power corrupts absolutely is still very much alive for some. There are some Humans who are okay, maybe even a little bit good before they become a God and then them becoming a God changes them wholly.

There are those who are not good, not at all and abuse their power. There are prisons in the older parts of the world that are made to house them when they turn evil and try and destroy the world. It's kept quiet when one escapes unless one is in the know. Keeping an eye out in America isn't that hard as evil Gods feel a little different than normal ones.

Humans who come into contact with a God like that have a taint to them. A taint that never goes away. It could be from just working around them, being at a shop that they visit a lot, or even going to bed with them. There is no leveled of taintedness. There is just the taint, and it's impossible to tell who tainted them.

March 2011

Aaron watched Spencer as he frowned at the paper in front of him. He cocked his head to the side and walked up to it. Garcia frowned but handed him one f the dry erase markers that were used on the display board that was being used. Spencer wrote a single name down.

"How did you know that I was going to complain about that?" Garcia asked.

Aaron looked at the paper and saw that there was a space there for that name, but it had not been on there.

"The spreadsheet gets rid of empty cells which means that this one was removed after the cells had been generated," Spencer said. He straightened up and looked at Aaron. "Lauren Reynolds is dead."

"Who is Lauren Reynolds?" Aaron and Morgan asked at the same time.

"I do not know, but Prentiss has said it five times that I know of over the past few weeks. It started when the paperwork you got said that Ian Doyle had escaped from where he was being held. Prentiss wasn't saying like she was shocked that someone was dead but was reminding herself that the person is dead."

"You think that she is...That Prentiss is Lauren Reynolds?" Aaron asked. Spencer nodded. "It does fit the naming theme. Okay, let's see if we can figure out where she went."

Aaron knew that Spencer was keeping something from him. It had to do with Ian Doyle. Yet, Aaron knew there were things that Spencer did not need to share with him when it came to Gods. Spencer was an Old God, he had a commitment to the other ones to make sure that he kept the secrets that he needed to. He would tell Aaron if it became something that was going to threaten them.

It took longer than Aaron wanted to get to Boston. It took a lot longer to find someone to get
information out of. Aaron listened to the comm that Dave had on him while they talked to Fahey on
the room. It was just Spencer and Dave up there. Aaron knew that Spencer was the best to try and
and crack him. Fahey was in nicotine withdrawal, and Spencer was up there smoking with him. Spencer
was smoking his own cigarettes instead of the ones that Fahey was smoking.

Fahey was blowing smoke out his ass, but he was giving them little bits at a time, with Spencer
playing the good cop to Dave's bad cop. Then the world went to hell when Aaron heard the sound of
a bullet going through a body and someone grunting in pain. Aaron took off up the stairs to the roof.
He found Dave on the ground with Fahey there as well, but Spencer was standing up and staring out
at a point in the distance. Aaron had his gun drawn waiting to see what happened.

"See Fahey, he was going to kill you," Spencer said. He turned around, and Aaron saw that he had
been shot. There was blood all over his chest where the shot had gone through his chest and was
leaking blood at a huge rate. "I saved your life so now you owe me or I'll just hold you up and let
them take that shot again."

"Shit," Fahey said. He started to spill it all. Aaron stood there and watched as Spencer didn't care
about the blood coming out of the bullet hole. Aaron was stuck still where he was.

Officers arrived in bulletproof vests and escorted Fahey off of the roof before Spencer allowed
Aaron near him.

"This is something I need to do on my own, Aaron. I have a scent that I need to follow, and you
need to follow to the end of whatever Fahey gives you. I need to make sure that Doyle isn't faking
the trail I'm on to get me off of his tail. I can't risk that with Prentiss's life. He could be just trying to
throw me off of his scent."

"You know who he is?"

"I think that I do. I think. You go and work on Fahey and get as much info as you can that way, and
I'll go my way." Spencer stepped forward and pressed a kiss to Aaron's cheek. "He's not going to get
either of us."

"Good. Now go."

Spencer walked to the side of the building and looked down before jumping. Aaron rushed to see
him disappear in an instant. He had used that weird teleportation thing of his. Aaron made a mental
note to have JJ lay in the sweet as hell snacks for the flight home. Or they were going to stop at a
buffet of some kind. Over the months since Spencer had smote an UnSub, they had ate at a lot of
buffets. The team wasn't sick of them thankfully as Spencer found weird as hell buffets including a
German one in Columbus, Ohio that was called an Autobahn Buffet that was a hit with all of them,
as were the cream puffs, of which Spencer finished off everyone else's when they could not.

Aaron wanted to make sure that they followed Spencer as quick as possible because he was pretty
damned sure that Spencer as no wrong in where he was going. Aaron knew that Spencer had been
on edge since the time that Doyle had escaped prison. He knew, and Aaron knew that he knew, but
neither of them said it.

There was little to do while Aaron tried to break Clyde Easter. Aaron knew that Dave had a hunch
but he needed fresh eyes and since everyone on the team had worked with Prentiss, there was no
choice but to go outside of the team. Cruz was the first choice in Aaron's book.

The warehouse that they tracked Doyle and Prentiss to was nearly empty, and it wasn't until opening
a door revealed several dead bodies inside that Aaron knew they were actually where Doyle was. He
had been afraid that they had missed him, that he had moved on. One of the men was still bleeding from the fresh wound, so he was very recently killed and dumped in there. Aaron had the team spread out. He and Morgan were taking the two sides of the building.

Aaron was the first to get eyes on Prentiss. She was tied to a chair while her eyes were focused to the side where Aaron saw that Doyle and Spencer were going at it. Aaron watched his lover for a few seconds as the man fought dirty with Doyle on the ground. Aaron wasn't sure if he should move forward, but Morgan beat him to that, untying Prentiss and tugging her back, giving her a gun.

"Reid, we have him," Aaron said.

Doyle stopped his fighting, and it was all that Spencer needed to roll him. Aaron heard a grunt and then the wheeze of lungs that were punctured. Another grunt and then Spencer was getting up. There was a knife buried in the other man's chest, it looked like a knife that Doyle might have had. Dave and a few other officers rushed forward to check the body while Aaron just stared at Spencer. He was covered in fresh blood from the spray of pulling the knife out and jabbing it into Doyle again.

"The knife is going with us when we leave," Spencer said.

"He's still alive," Dave said as he pressed his fingers to Doyle's neck after removing all visible weapons. One of the other officers was patting Doyle down.

"Not for long," Spencer said. He looked down at the man and then just a few seconds later it felt like an explosion happened in the room. Aaron felt it in his entire body, and he stumbled even though he was standing still. Morgan only reacted a little bit, but it seemed to affect Prentiss just a little bit more.

"What was that?" Morgan asked.

"That was a God dying," Spencer said. He stepped forward and pulled the knife from Doyle's chest and dropped it into an evidence bag that Aaron wasn't sure where he got it from. He was fairly certain that Spencer didn't carry them on his person all the time. He could be wrong given it was Spencer. "That is why the knife is coming with us. It's a God-killer knife, and Doyle has carried it for a long time."

"He's a God?" Prentiss asked.

"Yes."

"Then how did he have a kid?" Prentiss asked.

"I am unsure on that, but in his eyes, Declan was his. That's all that mattered."

Aaron pulled Spencer to him away from the dead body as the paramedics came in to take the body. The men and women stared at the body for a few seconds as the face changed some.

"Who is that?" The female paramedic asked.

"His only known name was Valhalla, a terrorist New God who popped up around the time of the first World War. He has been on the most wanted list in the world for a long time. No wonder he changed his face," Spencer said. He shook his head, and Aaron saw that the blood on his clothes was not trying to dry. "This is going to become a media circus. Every single God in the city will have felt that and they will start to talk."

"Dave," Aaron said as he looked at him.
"You got it. I'll get a perimeter set up. JJ with me," Dave said as he finally holstered his weapon and drew JJ with him. Morgan was with Prentiss, keeping her close to him. Aaron knew that no one was going to let her get too far from them for a while. Aaron was going to talk to her about the fact that she had gone out on her own, just like he had with Morgan two years back. It was not someone that Aaron wanted on his team. Aaron had defended her actions to Morgan, and he would do it in public because he understood stooping to the level of the people they were chasing because there was no other way to do it. From the second that it was found out that Ian Doyle was Valhalla and not just Valhalla the weapons person but Valhalla the New God Terrorist, the BAU would get a lot of commendations for stopping him. Aaron was pretty sure that Spencer had only done it because Doyle was never going to stop chasing Prentiss and if North Korea had not been able to hold him, then there was nowhere else that would. Human prisons for God were still new and very much in a testing phase.

Everyone who had an opinion on the matter fell on two sides, capital punishment and prison for life. Given that life was forever for Gods, Aaron wasn't sure that they should go for that, but in the case of Doyle and everything that he had done, Aaron was firmly in the camp of a death sentence. They were fighting, and it wasn't like a knife had a trigger that needed to be pulled. It was pretty much a stab and go kind of weapon.

"So what exactly is your body count?" Morgan asked.

"I don't know. I'm not trying to keep track." Spencer frowned and followed the body as it was taken out of the place. Aaron looked at Morgan and then at Prentiss.

"Prentiss, we are doing the debrief before we get on the jet. Be prepared because I am not going to be nice at all."

"You got it, Hotch."

XxXxXxX

There were times that Aaron hated the fact that he did not sleep anymore. He had no clue where Spencer was. Spencer had gone through a debrief with Dave before he disappeared. Aaron had seen his clothes in an evidence bag and his go-bag in the room they were using. Prentiss's debrief had been long, and it had taken a lot to get the full case of what had gone down with Doyle the first time released. As soon as the CIA and Interpol had learned who Doyle was, it was like the world had opened up. The team had at least another day in Boston before they could go home.

"You know, this team. I can see why it would hate Boston," a voice said behind Aaron.

Aaron turned around to look at the person that was standing there. If it weren't for the fact that Aaron could only slightly see them, Aaron would have thought that he had heard things. The thing, person, or whatever it was in front of him just stood there. It was like it was hidden behind a veil that was totally dark, but that blackness was unnatural.

"Who are you?"

"You would know me as Grannus, Agent Hotchner."

"God of spas, healing thermal and mineral springs, and the sun."

"You know your Gods," Grannus said. He almost became solid enough for Aaron to see but then faded again. "I'm glad I was able to find you. Sometimes if I have never met a God, I can't find them even though they are in my city. Would you walk with me?"
"Sure," Aaron said. It was better than just standing around trying to find Spencer by feel and being unable to. Aaron had never come across that since he had become a God, but he knew that he did not know everything. "And what do you mean by this team hating Boston?"

"Bale, Foyet, and now Doyle. I know what happens in my city, even if I can't always stop it. I'm a God of Healing and while others might be able to do against what they are and kill, I cannot. I can maybe push things into minds and ask for help, but Gods are picky asses."

"I never put that all together," Aaron said. He thought back on it and agreed that Boston and the team was not a good match. He wondered if he could use that as a reason to never come back to Boston and shuffle those cases onto other teams. He wondered if Cruz would go for that because he was pretty sure that Strauss never would have. He might just make Spencer write a long write up on it and give all the reasons why the team had PTSD when it came to Boston, and while therapy would be nice it was hard when they all feared a city. Aaron's was the only one that had an entirely happy ending. Prentiss's was only slightly better than Gideon's time in the city. Aaron wasn't sure where they were. He looked around and realized that they were somewhere that he had never been before.

"You have other cases that come between. I have just my city and the harm done inside of it. I shuddered when Valhalla came back to my area. I knew that horribleness would follow." Grannus waved a dark arm, and something in front of Aaron shimmered, and then it parted almost like a curtain. On the other side was steam and a lot of it, seeping out through the opening. "Come and relax, Agent Hotchner."

Aaron followed behind Grannus and felt that the area they were going into was shielded. He had felt nothing and then everything when he passed through. He also felt Spencer on the other side of that doorway. It was interesting to feel just how many Gods there were on the other side of that doorway. Aaron looked at Grannus who he could see all the way now. He was a beautiful man, someone who would have been popular in Roman times. Not the kind of beauty that was valued in men in the day and age they were in. Aaron smiled and nodded at the man before going to find his wayward lover.

Even just passing through that veil, Aaron felt better. He knew that he was in a spa, but not one like Humans had around. No, this would probably be full of naked men and women, probably various forms of sex happening all around and that kind of thrilled Aaron. Unlike his jealousy at finding Spencer in that brothel before, Aaron wanted to see what others were up to when it came to what they did in public in a place like this.

There were alcoves everywhere, and Aaron looked in them. He was sure that some of the people in the place were Human. He watched for a few seconds as a woman went down on a man while he was getting a shoulder massage from a man who was naked. The next few rooms had no sex, and then he came upon what he assumed six people engaged in one sex act or another in a room. At least he could count six sets of arms, he wasn't sure there weren't more. Then he felt a wave of intense pleasure, and it wasn't from the people having sex, it was across that bond that he had with Spencer. Aaron started to feel that angry beast called jealousy that lived inside of him. He didn't stop moving until he found Spencer but what he found was a room full of steam, and when he entered all the way he found that Spencer was stretched out face down on a massage table and a clothed woman was working on his back. She was straddling his waist, and he was naked but had a towel over his ass.

"Hello, you need to wait outside, and I'll get you next," the woman said glaring at Aaron as he shut the door.

"He's with me. He is the one that I paid for," Spencer said without looking up.

"Oh, he's Aaron?"

"Yes, Maisy, he's Aaron. Aaron this is Maisy, she's a Goddess of massage. New Goddess but still,
her hands are magic, and it's just what we need."

"Sounds good," Aaron said. He looked for a room to get naked in but found that this room was the only one. He saw Spencer's pile of clothes on the side of the room. He walked over and toed off his shoes before he shoved them beside Spencer's on the stand. Aaron stripped naked. He had learned a long time before, while in the Academy, to not be bothered by nakedness. He piled his clothes on top of Spencer's folding his underwear so the dirty inside wouldn't get on anything, his socks were stuffed down into his shoes. He turned around and saw that on the other side of Spencer and Maisy was another table. He walked over and laid on. Maisy tossed a towel over his ass, and it landed perfectly. Aaron turned his head to look at Spencer and saw that he looked like he was asleep. Spencer usually had the best ideas on things to do to calm down after cases, even if it was just fucking each other brains out.

After a little while, Aaron felt Maisy climb onto him. Her hands brushed up and down his back, mapping everything out before she found what Aaron assumed as the worst knot on his body. It hurt like hell as she dug into it and then it released, and Aaron felt himself go limp into the table. Aaron closed his eyes and gave into Maisy's wonderful hands. It could have been hours, even days later that he finally felt Maisy slip down off of his back to work on his legs. When she was done with them, she worked on his arms before having him turn over so she could do it to Aaron's face. Aaron had never had someone massage his face before, and he was shocked at how damned good that it felt.

"Good?" Maisy asked as she lifted her hands from Aaron's face.

"Oh, yes. Thank you. I'll take him into the steam room now to relax some."

"This room leads to the singles steam room, so no one is going to join you in there. Don't do anything that I wouldn't do!"

"There is little that you won't do that. I wouldn't as well."

Aaron opened his eyes as the door shut. Spencer was standing at the foot end of the table. He held out his hand, and Aaron sat up and took that hand. Spencer tugged on him. Aaron followed him as they walked to a wall and then Spencer walked backward through it. Aaron startled at that but didn't stop in the following of him. It reminded him of that movie with the wizard and the train station. Aaron felt the blast of warm heat as he crossed through the wall barrier. It felt damned good. Spencer kept on backing up until he dropped down onto the bench that was behind him. He tugged on Aaron until Aaron was straddling his lap. Aaron cupped the side of Spencer's face with his free hand, and when Spencer let go of his other, he reached up and fisted Spencer's hair to hold him in place. Aaron groaned at the look of naked want on Spencer's face.

Spencer grabbed Aaron by his hips and pulled him even closer, thrusting up into him. Aaron felt his cock start to harden while Spencer was already hard. It felt good, his muscles loose and his body relaxed. It was simple, the rubbing of cock on cock as wells the kiss that Spencer pushed his face up into. They kissed lazily as their bodies rushed toward that precipice that they both wanted to reach. Aaron was the first to tip over into orgasm, gasping into Spencer's mouth as he did so. Spencer thrust up into him a few more times before he came as well. Aaron didn't try and get off of Spencer's lap until his lover pushed at his hips instead of pulling him closer. Aaron slipped backward and looked around and found a stack of towels as well as a basin of water. He used the ladle to drench one of the towels before cleaning himself up and walking over to do it to Spencer. Spencer was laying back on the bench he was on, his head tipped back, and he looked like he was fucked out.

Aaron just enjoyed looking at Spencer who looked like he had been fucked hard and put up wet before a minute before he started to clean up Spencer. He felt Spencer's eyes on him and looked up from his crouching position. Spencer had tipped his head to the side to look at him. He was smiling.
"There are perks to Boston but not many. There are several more detracting things, but we can't predict that shit, but I would say that the BAU has done something to piss off enough Gods that this place has become anathema to it."

"I agree. I was thinking that you should write up a paper on it and give it to Cruz and he can kick it up higher. How being in Boston is giving this team PTSD from all the shit that's happened to us here. So far there hasn't been a death in Boston but with the way it's going, today could have ended in Prentiss's death. I would rather never set foot in this city again."

"Well, I can certainly write a report that would make it so that I swear that I'll burn the city down if I have to set foot here again, that should stop us from getting another case here on for at least a little while. Remember I'm coddled, and if I think that you coming back here will set you to blow, they'll keep us from here just a little bit longer. Though in all fairness, we did not know we would be going to Boston when we picked up what we thought was a local case."

"How long do we have in here?"

"Well, considering that the steam doesn't affect us the same way that it does humans, nor does the heat at all, we could stay in here until the end of time but as far as how much I have paid for? All night. I figure when the sun rises we can go back and get things finalized and head home. I want to see the back of this town as soon as possible. There is a reason I am hiding in here rather than walking the city like I normally do. I was going to text you and tell you how to find me, but it seems that Grannus found you."

"Yeah, Grannus did. I had fun walking with him. He was of the same mind that this town and the BAU is cursed. We shall have to see how other teams make out on cases here." Spencer crooked a finger at Aaron, and he tossed the towel into the corner where there was another thrown there. He crawled up into Spencer's lap again, their soft cocks twitched as they brushed on each other but didn't try and do anything more than that.

"I like this, being here with you like this. Nothing more than frottage to get us off and then just being together, bared to each other and I mean more than just nakedness. We are still essentially strangers to each other, and it's going to take a long time for me to learn the differences between you and Ar while you are still adjusting to me being Mimir."

"We are not strangers. You know me better than anyone else in the world has ever known me or even tried to know me. I feel like you, and I could not see each other for millennia, and we would still know each other better. Mimir is no different than Spencer Reid, just has a few quirks that are a little different but I love them all the same. I don't want to ever lose you, Spencer Reid. I don't want to ever have to say that you are no longer in my life. And it's more than how attached Jack has got to you. When I found out about Haley, you stayed around even though it brought you a lot of trouble. You've had chance after chance to leave, and you've tried to a few times to make my Human life easier, but we are tied in ways that no one could have ever guessed. I want this Spencer, bad days and all."

"You sappy New God," Spencer said, and the term sounded like an endearment.

Aaron leaned in to kiss him again, making out sounded like an excellent idea at the moment. He wanted the closeness after the horrible case and nearly losing Prentiss. This was precisely what the doctor ordered, even if it was just what Doctor Spencer Reid ordered.
Chapter 25

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Sex, love, and monogamy. Humans place a lot of things on each of them. If one is in love, one can't have sex with anyone else. Sex should only be shared with that one special person in the world who you decide that you want to be with for the rest of your life. Especially if you are a female. Men can do what they want, and the fault lies at the feet of the woman. She should have done this, or this, or this. Or not done this, that, or the other. I sometimes delight in rendering judgment on the men who decide that a woman isn't allowed to say no.

Sex though is one of the best things in the world, and even two people in love can want something different. Consent is the thing though, the consent of both partners before allowing that third in or even just allowing the other part to have an outside of the relationship sexual encounter. I never had to worry about that as much, my lover and I only ever had a single temptation, and he was the greatest temptation in the world. Thankfully, he never stuck around for long and was gone for very long times as he was not a soul that could stay settled for long at all. I hated when he left, but I would never have changed who he was.

October 2011

Aaron looked around the loft as Spencer was calling it. They had moved out of it for the last two weeks while the finishing touches were being done to parts of it. It was kind of beautiful, Aaron thought. He could see touches of both of them in the loft. It was interesting, to say the least. He loved the two sets of stairs that went up to the second floor. The two apartments had been enormous, to begin with, but now they were downright massive. Spencer had taken over the planning but had allowed Aaron to make his own suggestions. Jack was allowed control over his domain as well. Even if Aaron hated the colors, he picked.

It had amused Aaron to no end that Spencer had been an architect in a different life before he had become Spencer Reid. Before he had been in Oklahoma City. Aaron could see it in the way that he had drawn up the plans that he wanted for the Loft. The layout was wonderful. Yes, there was some wasted space on the second floor, but it wasn't that wasted as the closets at the end of the halls held extra things that were needed but didn't need to be on the first floor.

The only part of the Loft that Aaron had not even touched was Spencer's kitchen. That whole thing had been entirely in Spencer's control. The main area was spread nearly from corner to corner at the back part of the Loft. The only thing that stopped the kitchen from dominating that whole area was the two sets of spiral staircases that were in the corners. There were two parts of an island that separated the kitchen from the rest of the first floor. There was a gap made into the middle, so that one didn't have to go all the way around as the island stretched the whole length of the kitchen. The sink was at the center while the stove and fridge were in the center of the areas made by the divide that was the sink. Spencer did ask if the placement of it all was okay and Aaron had agreed. Outside of the random breakfast or dinner, if Spencer wasn't home, Aaron didn't cook. Jack was going to grow up to love cooking though as watching Spencer cook was one of his newest fascinations. Aaron liked it as well, but he had no want to try and take that job from Spencer.

Aaron was kind of in love with the fridge. It was huge, something that belonged in a restaurant and not a place where only three people lived. Four if one counted Peaches. Still, it was always full, but nothing ever went to waste. Though there was a shelf that was always full but never seemed to run
out and that was the collection of Spencer's beers. Aaron had learned to appreciate the beers since he could not get drunk on them anymore. Aaron found himself drinking them more and more, and Spencer never said anything. Aaron had long ago stopped trying to split things up as far as money went. Aaron's money was his to do with as he pleased, but that was kind of false as well as if it had to do with paying the utilities, the money for the remodel, or food, Aaron was not allowed. Spencer did let Aaron pay for his clothes and anything that had to do with Jack that was not food.

Sex was not an issue, the lack of sex was when Spencer was displeased with Aaron trying to exert his will over Spencer and force him to take payment on things. Aaron realized that Spencer had grown a very big spine over the thousands of years that he had been alive and that Aaron it seemed always caved to what Spencer wanted, even back when Aaron had been just Ar.

"So, worth it?" Spencer asked as he stepped up to lean against the wall of the bathroom between the library and the office. Aaron found that part a little weird but he it would grow on him. The office was in the left corner while a library was in the right. Between the two stretched a very lengthy but not very widthy bathroom. In the corner made by the office and the bathroom was a small three-floor condo that was for Peaches. The Pixie had been happy and as far as Aaron knew had not come out of it yet. There was a magical spot inside of it that would allow him to keep fresh food in there. It was not flush with the ground or the ceiling but did have a spot where Stormy could lay on the top.

A pretty penny had been paid for the construction team to put everything back, the bedroom stuff, the living room stuff, but Aaron was kind of glad of that because it meant that after the hell that had been the last case he didn't have to work at making his home liveable. Aaron had hated the case just a little bit, it was a revisit of a point that Aaron had hoped would make the town heal, but it had just made it worse. Boise would have a lot of healing to do after finding out the truth that even the BAU had not got into a decade before.

"It's very worth it, though I can't say anything from a financial point of view and only from the hassle of living out of a hotel for two weeks even though we're only on a case for a short time of that. It's still pretty damned nice. I'm not a house kind of person. I lived in one with Haley because I thought we were going to fill it with three kids and we needed the space. While this has a lot of room, I like it, and it doesn't feel too open. We have the areas set up or will once we get everything picked out and delivered to us."

"Petal's ready to start to take those if we are away on a case. We can make a small shopping trip to get things for Jack's bedroom and playroom. There is no rush on anything else. We have enough to do and can tackle things slowly."

"You know Morgan asked me about the fact that you are so laid back and don't rush. A lot of the New Gods we come across are very rushy, but then again you are not a New God. I told him that you learned not to rush when basically caring for your mother before she died."

"The death of Diana Reid would have been enough to shatter Spencer's mind if he had not been set to become a God. It would have changed him in a lot of ways. Some days I am glad that he never had to survive the death of his mother as well. He was attached to her, it wasn't unhealthy, and it wasn't creepy. He was just wholly focused on her as well as his education, but even that was because of her. He never would have done a thing that would have besmirched what she had raised him to be." Spencer moved to where he was standing in front of Aaron. He braced his hands on the wall and grinned at him. Aaron grinned back. He wasn't shocked when Spencer slowly leaned in. Aaron didn't move forward at all to shorten the time between Spencer starting to move and when their lips connected.

The kiss was tender and soft, a seeking of affection more than the start of something else. Aaron
though did reach out and grabbed Spencer's hips and pulled him close. Spencer came willingly. He settled there with his legs on either side of Aaron's where he was leaning against the wall still.

"Jack won't be home for several hours, Jessica was going to take him shopping with her as he is the master of the lists." Spencer didn't pull his lips away that far, and Aaron could feel his lips move on his own.

"And?" Aaron asked.

"Why don't we christen a room?" Spencer's hand on the wall on Aaron's left side dropped down, and Aaron lost sight of it for a few seconds until it cupped him through his pants. Aaron thrust up into that hand. He shuddered as Spencer squeezed just a little. Spencer dropped his other hand down and wiggled it between Aaron's back and the wall. He didn't stop moving it until he had that arm wrapped all the way around Aaron's waist. He used it to tug Aaron with him to the right. The opening that was closest to the laundry area of the bathroom and the opening to the library was all that was that direction. Aaron didn't fight him, even when Spencer pulled him into the laundry room.

"The laundry room?" Aaron asked. He looked and saw that the divider wasn't closed between the two areas of the room. It was just a simple sliding curtain that ran along the ceiling that would allow for someone to have privacy while someone else could do laundry. Aaron felt something at his back, cold and hard. He looked to see that it was the washer. Which was refilling at the moment after the load that Spencer had started had finished the first part of the cycle.

"Up," Spencer said.

Aaron climbed up onto the washer and waited for whatever Spencer wanted to do. The water cut off, and Aaron felt the washer kick a little as it changed over modes. It started to rock some with the swishing of the water inside as it agitated. Spencer blocked Aaron in with his hands. The washer was a large model, but it wasn't too high up, and so Aaron was just about the same height as he would be if he were standing up. Aaron spread his legs just a little before, but Spencer grabbed his knees and boxed them closer to him. Aaron felt Spencer's hands on his pants, unbuckling the belt and then working the zipper open. Aaron was only barely hard but as Spencer touched him to pull him out, hardened more and more.

Spencer's first swipe up and down on his cock with saliva slick fingers, Aaron was fully hard. He tried to thrust up into Spencer's hand, but Spencer settled a hand on the joint of trunk and leg and kept Aaron down.

"Please," Aaron begged.

"I'll get you there. You never need to beg. I'll always get you there. I'll always give you so much pleasure." Spencer's lips settled on the skin of Aaron's neck, breathing the words over his skin before teeth nipped at him. Aaron's breathe escaped in a gasp, and he reached out to grab what he could of Spencer which was his arms. Aaron kept a hold of him there, grounding himself as Spencer's hand worked him. Aaron felt himself getting closer to that point, panting in Spencer's ear. Aaron shuddered as Spencer's hand twisted as it hit the top of his cock before the thumb brushed over his slit.

Spencer worked Aaron up and backed off several times until Aaron felt like he was going to jerk Spencer's hand off of him and stroke his cock until he came all over Spencer. Aaron dug his hand into Spencer's arm tighter than he usually would and started to move his hand as the washer kicked over into the spin cycle. Even with Aaron on it, the device shook some. Aaron heard Spencer chuckle, and then the hand on his cock started to move with purpose. Aaron came seconds later, gasping out Spencer's name and trying to find Spencer's mouth to kiss him. Spencer allowed it, and
Aaron groaned out the rest of his orgasm into Spencer's mouth. Aaron shuddered as Spencer milked the last out of his cock before finally releasing it. Aaron laid his head on the juncture of Spencer's neck and stayed there, breathing erratically as his body calmed down from orgasm. Spencer was petting him, on the shoulder, on the arm, before a hand tangled in his hair. There was on hand though that stayed on Aaron's leg and that as the one that Aaron hoped was smeared with release.

"Where do you want to debauch me?"

"A double christening?" Aaron asked before he licked up the side of Spencer's neck. Spencer shuddered in Aaron's arms. It was a quirk that Aaron loved to do. It was such a weird thing, but it turned Spencer on so very quickly. Aaron ended that with a nip at Spencer's jaw before pushing at him. Spencer backed up. Aaron slid down the front of the washer and made sure his pants didn't fall. He buttoned them back, not worrying about doing anything but tucking himself back in. Jack wasn't around so he didn't need to worry about making sure that Jack didn't see anything that he shouldn't at his age.

Aaron thought about where he wanted to have Spencer go. He pulled Spencer that step closer to kiss him before starting to direct him backward, taking kisses as he wanted them. Spencer didn't fight him at all and seemed to already know the layout of the place and moved only when he was about to be run into something. Aaron turned him to the right as soon as they were clear of the doorway. The library had two doors, and both were on the same side just a wall separating them. The library and the office had direct access to the bathroom so that if either of them were working on something and didn't want to be disturbed, they could not be. The door was thankfully open. Aaron kicked it shut when he crossed over into the room. Spencer took a few steps without Aaron, plopping down in the large armchair that had appeared out of nowhere just before they had moved out to the hotel. It was hold and leather, and Aaron wasn't exactly sure what kind of leather it was. It was a deep purple. Spencer loved it, he said. Aaron, of course, had not seen Spencer init but as they had just got home that wasn't unreasonable.

Spencer worked his pants open, pulling his cock free. He was hard. Aaron licked his lips and braced his hands on the arms of the chair and let them take his weight as he dropped to his knees. He reached up when he was settled and pulled Spencer's face down to his to kiss him before ducking his head down. He licked at the head of Spencer's cock and groaned as he tasted the fluid he had already released. Aaron had never been big on giving head before. Hell, he was still new to the whole bisexual thing. He had just never found the act of head very attractive. Though with Spencer it felt so much different.

Aaron licked from the base of Spencer's cock to the tip before doing it again just on a different side. After his third pass, he actually slid his lips around the head of the cock and went down. Aaron heard Spencer moving, the leather creaking before a hand gripped the back of his head and the other grabbed the arm of the chair right at Aaron's head. Spencer's hand didn't try and direct him, just hold him steady as he moved up and down on the cock in his mouth. Every few strokes of Aaron's lips up and down, Spencer would move his hand, scratching at the back of Aaron's scalp. It was a wonderful feeling, and he stretched up into after the third time that Spencer did it.

"Your mouth," Spencer said as he subtly thrust up as Aaron came down on his cock. Aaron was ready for it and swallowed around the head when it got to the back of his throat. Aaron was figuring out what he could do and what Spencer liked as they did this more and more.

Aaron wasn't shocked when Spencer's hand tightened in his hair after a few more passes, that signaled that he was coming. Aaron braced for the strongness of the first taste of release and his taste buds adjusted by the time that he was swallowing, he kept Spencer's cock at the back of his throat, having learned that first. Spencer's hand pulled him up, and Aaron willingly gave into the kiss that he
wanted. Aaron knew that they both were going to need to change and take a damned shower, but Aaron didn't care about that. They had time.

Spencer kept on tugging until Aaron was seated in his lap. "Can we have a cuddle day? Movies on the couch and warm foods? Chicken and noodles over mashed potatoes for dinner? I can head out and get the stuff for it after I show and change clothes. I can make the noodles easy, and they can dry over the course of the day."

"That sounds tiring." Aaron nuzzled at the side of Spencer's face and leaned back to look at him. He knew that things like that Spencer liked to do so he wasn't going to say no. He hadn't had homemade noodles like that since he was a kid. Haley had looked a recipe once and had vetoed it, Aaron hadn't wanted the noodles enough to do them on his own. He was looking forward to Spencer's recipe for noodles. "But it sounds good. We can peck for lunch. Sandwiches and such, chips, pickles."

"You and your pickles," Spencer said. He was smiling, and while his eyes were looking a little tired, he wasn't too bad. Aaron thought that maybe just cuddling on the couch with the three of them was a great idea. The new couch that was already in the living room pulled out and instead of the standard bed inside, there was just a frame that came up, and a pile of huge blocks of foam were pulled out of the closet in the corner and added to it. It was a custom build from one of Spencer's many friends around the city for Spencer and Aaron. It had been nice when they had tried it out in the store where it had been made. It made for excellent TV watching, which was the reason behind it.

"I like your pickle," Aaron said with a grin on his face. Spencer pushed at him, and Aaron fell backward on his ass. He lost it at the look of consternation on Spencer's face. Aaron knew he would pay for calling Spencer's cock a pickle, but he would take that.

Aaron rounded the corner and saw the man that had been a few blocks back as well when Aaron had rounded his route again. Aaron had started on the route that was a circle that repeated four times to get the length of the run that he wanted. He didn't want to be too far from Jack as he was still a little sick from a cold and was clingy. Currently, his wanted target was Spencer, but that could change in an instant. Aaron didn't try and limit that kind of stuff, so if Jack wanted him, he would go home and change and then just cuddle with Jack on the couch.

The man was handsome and was someone that Aaron would have looked at twice in a different life. The man though looked at Aaron like he was trying to study him. Aaron was his furthest from the apartment, so he wasn't that worried.

It wasn't until he was closer to home and he was there again. The man was following Aaron like he was trying to study him. Aaron was his furthest from the apartment, so he wasn't that worried.

It wasn't until he was closer to home and he was there again. The man was following Aaron. He had to be, even if Aaron didn't understand how. Aaron ran into the back of the restaurant, waiting for Jin to have the dinner for everyone done. Spencer had called it in to be ready based on Aaron's average running time of the route that he was on. Aaron paused at the doorway into the actual kitchen area and watched as Jin dumped Spencer's main dish into the container. He closed it up and turned to wave at Aaron. Spencer had ordered enough for an army, but he had plans to stay out of bed and work all night on something in the office, so Aaron wasn't that shocked as Spencer liked to peck all night long like that. Aaron's plans were reading with his e-reader in Jack's room as he only really slept when someone was with him. Spencer had taken the night before, and Aaron had promised to take tonight so that Spencer could get done what he needed to get done.

Aaron was turning to go into the hallway that only had access from inside the restaurant in non-public areas after the remodel had come into that area as well when he saw that the man was ordering food from Petal. Aaron got a really good look at the man's face and was shocked at the feeling that he had that he knew the man. He had seen him before or something. Aron wondered if that was his Godness or just someone that he had seen within the FBI or such. Aaron nodded at the man, and he
nodded back before Aaron left to go up into the apartment. He looked at the backdoor that led into the hallway and double checked that it was locked. Everyone who needed access to it had a key and others went through the restaurant. It was an added measure of security in the face of Foyet and just wanting to be more secure. Though Aaron was sure that whoever tried to get into the building would have a hard time getting through Petal and Jin. Aaron was more scared of Petal than he was Jin. Though he had seen Jin deboning a chicken once and that had made Aaron a little shaky.

Going up the steps as fast as he could, Aaron reminded himself to tell Spencer about the man who had been following Aaron around. It could be as innocent as someone who knew he was a God and was interested or it could be another God who he had met before, and so he felt familiar. Aaron had come across both of those. Aaron would wait until Jack was asleep though. He did not want to worry about the boy after the Foyet stuff.

Aaron was not looking forward to working the next day. Their computer software contract was up, and the next contractor was about to be announced, and that always meant issues with people. The BAU didn't care much, except for Garcia and the analysts as long as the computers worked. Still, it was a headache and that shit rolled downhill.

Aaron frowned at his new work laptop. He had been okay because most of the actual computers in the BAU it was easy to cover the logo of the computer with a post-it note and go about his life, but the logo for the laptop was on the center of the trackpad and therefore impossible to cover up. Aaron had nothing against Grimes Tech Industries. It was an excellent company who made some of the best computers in the world. Hell, everything that Grimes Tech made was the best. It was just that the logo was one that made Aaron uncomfortable. It never had before, but after talking with Spencer, Aaron had figured out that when he had been set on the path to becoming a God, that was when it had started to bother him. Spencer had offered nothing about it, but he had got a pinched look on his face when Grimes Tech had been brought up.

Garcia had been over the moon about the new technology for the BAU, that had included tablets for cases for everyone including Spencer but Spencer would still want paper files for reading and Aaron understood why but getting new information when he was out and about the tablet would be a good idea.

The light changed, so Aaron looked away from the shut laptop. His bag had not come with the computer, and no one could find it, so another had to be acquired for him so he carried it loose to and from work when he was going to be working on work things at home. He should have the bag the next day, Cruz had near promised it. Aaron wondered about how the next day was going to go. It was a training day for the software, and while Garcia was going to be the one giving it, it was still going to be boring. Spencer was going to work from home, and Garcia had pouted about that, but as Spencer used Grimes Tech exclusively for everything technology related that he had, Aaron understood why he was not. The FBI specific software was going to roll out slowly as it was fine tuned by the techies and analysts across the FBI before trickling down to the other staff.

Aaron parked in his parking spot, frowning at the Mustang that was parked in the guest spot for their area of the parking lot. Aaron had never seen the Mustang before and while he wasn't above thinking it was someone else, the fact that at sign declared the spot Guest Parking for the Hotchner-Reid household meant that usually, no one parked there if they were not coming to see Aaron and Spencer. Sheila and Jessica shared a spot and if they were swapping the other parked in the guest spot. Aaron picked up his briefcase and then his computer before getting out of the car. Spencer had gone home half day as Jack was still sickly and clinging to Spencer now. Aaron was for at night while Spencer was during the day. Spencer got just as much work done at home as he did at work, so no one ever questioned when he went home a lot.
There was no sound as Aaron got up to the floor where he could enter the loft. He tried the door and found that it was unlocked. The first thing that he saw was that Spencer was at the stove cooking and there was a man sitting at the counter with his back to the door. Spencer looked at him, turning and smiling. The man turned, and Aaron saw that it as the man from the night before. That feeling of apprehension that Aaron got when he looked at the Grimes Tech logo was back, and Aaron felt like he might throw up.

"That look is troubling," the man said. His accent was everywhere and nowhere at the same time. He stood up and walked over to Aaron, and as he did, Aaron knew who he was. Who he had been when Aaron had seen him last. Before he had been stalking Aaron has he had been running.

"Jax," Aaron said. He swallowed because he had no clue where that name came from.

"You know, Ir, he's very pretty. Much prettier than he was before. I heard the whispers that Ar was back, but I didn't believe them but fuck me." Jax reached out his hand, and Aaron shook it out of rote. Aaron looked at his face because something else was nagging at it. It had to be his Mustang out there.

"Shit," Aaron said putting the apprehension that he felt when looking at the logo with the feeling he got when he had seen Jax up close. "Jackson Grimes."

"You would be correct." Jackson dropped Aaron's hand and sat down again. He patted the chair beside him. Aaron sat down. He looked at Spencer who was cooking a stir-fry of some kind in the huge wok that Jin had given him. It wasn't as good as what Petal or Jin made, but it was pretty damned good.

"You are a God," Aaron said.

"Yes. Old God. I'm called a God of Technology now, but back then it was God of Invention or even Change. I've adapted well to life in the New World."

"Why do I feel such apprehension when I see your logo?"

"Because it's been my logo for a very long time. You've seen it etched on stone or burned into the wood to tell someone that they had found me. The last time that you saw me, we had fought about you doing something stupid. I regret that I couldn't stop you, but Mimir has always beat into my head that everyone needs free will to make choices, even if they are stupid assed choices. You left and then you were killed. It's probably that. Your Godness remembers that and fears what I feel about it all. It fears that I'll hate you, but I'll never hate you. I've never found that love like you and Mimir had. I've never found anything other than my inventions that makes me happy like they do. Though I have had distractions in the form of flesh throughout the years. There has been dalliances with other Gods and sometimes more than one God at a time."

"You've had sex with us," Aaron said.

"If there is someone I've come back to time and again it's the two of you. You are both still way too new to have me join in again but since I was coming to the FBI tomorrow to help with some of the training in a few units, I thought that telling Mimir I'd be in his area was the best thing. I didn't realize that he was not going into work. Though I am glad given that I felt the urge to kiss the fuck out of you the moment you walked in the door. I probably would have had a few guns in my face for trying to take you."

"Better get used to my new name, Jax," Spencer said. His back was still to them. He turned off the fire and dumped the food onto three different plates, adding a little more sauce to the first before he
set the pan on the stove and grabbed two plates. He set those in front of the two of them before grabbing what was to be his own plate. He stood up a lot to eat. There was already three forks in the center. "Eat like humans and then after we can talk. I refuse to tell you everything Aaron as too much information can be bad, but we can tell you some. Like the first time that we met Jax and how he pushed me into a wall and kissed me thinking that I was a prostitute."

"You jerked me off of him and threw me to the floor. I had never seen two men so beautiful at that moment. I could see the love pouring off of the both of you and only then did I see the fact you were both Gods. I figured I was always in deep shit that if I asked to have sex with the both of you, it couldn't hurt." Jackson speared a piece of shrimp from his stir-fry as well as a few of the vegetables and ate it. He scooped up rice next. "I never thought that Spencer would want that. It wasn't hard after that to figure out who the two of you were. While you defended Mimir with your life, Mimir was vicious when it came to you. I'd heard the tales of things he had done to Goddesses who thought that they could seduce you away from him. Over the years you two became a flame that enticed me back every once in a while. In the new ages, with you being gone, Aaron, it's been a lot more frequent than it had ever been."

"Sometimes when things were dark, and I thought that I couldn't go on without Ar," Spencer started as he picked at his food. Aaron saw that he had eaten a good deal. Aaron didn't think he had ever seen Spencer picking at his food like that before. "Jax was the only thing that kept me going."

"Daddy?" Jack asked.

Aaron turned to see him standing about halfway down the spiral staircase that was on his side of the house. He had a stuffed animal in his arms and a blanket dragging behind him. Aaron smiled at him and set down his fork before walking over to pick him up. Jack cuddled into him and walked over to sit down again. Aaron saw that Spencer was setting down a bowl of something from the fridge. Aaron saw that it was cold oatmeal with something in it. Jack picked up his spoon and pulled out a small bit of it, a pumpkin seed included. Aaron shook his head. Jack rarely ever wanted just plain oatmeal anymore at all. Which was really just fine, Aaron didn't mind at all, but it made Aaron think about their eating habits if Spencer was not in their life.

"Looking into Aaron Hotchner, I couldn't help but laugh when I saw the name of your first child," Jackson said.

"It wasn't my first thought, but it was in there," Spencer said. "My first thought went to Jack the Ripper. And considering that Aaron had vetoed a lot of other names because of their connection to serial killers, I was shocked he settled for Jack. It wasn't until after he became a God that I wondered about the name. Though your name is Jackson this time around."

"So the world thinks you are a New God," Aaron said as he settled his fork into his right hand to eat with is left still wrapped around Jack and holding him in his lap. Jack was eating his oatmeal pretty damned quickly. Which was good because he had not had much of an appetite since he had been sick. Aaron hoped that this meant he was on the other side of it. He settled into finished eating while Spencer and Jackson told him a little more about their very sordid past it seemed.
From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Men who believe in luck and that the Gods give a fuck about their winning streak are easy to manipulate. Even the Gods that care about gambling and luck don’t worry that much about a single person. We Gods are numerous, but it’s not a one to one ratio. I can handle the knowledge of the world, but I cannot be there to help each person learn what they need to learn. Instead, I just exist and make sure that knowledge exists.

The man who is truly to be feared is the one who does something wrong and thinks that he’s rewarded for it. He’ll continue to do that thing over and over again. Until someone stops him.

February 2012

Aaron watched as Spencer deftly played game after game he lost some, and he won some, but he kept on watching the cards closely. He also flirted. With everyone at the table but also the person that he had singled out as the UnSub. That was strange to see, but Aaron knew it was part of the persona that he was. Spencer had dropped his own money into the game match and used Dave as the front for it. The team would question where the money had come from if Spencer had kept it as it was his. So instead they had made up the plan for Dave to act like it was his.

So far Spencer was doing really well at the table. He was stringing the UnSub along letting the man think that he was going to win until that final hand where it was down to Spencer and the UnSub. Aaron watched Spencer through the cameras and knew that the man was going to snap when Spencer laid his final trap and won. He nodded at Morgan who moved to get people into place to protect him. As soon as the UnSub attacked Spencer, they would have the opening they needed to take him into custody. Spencer laid down a royal flush in the heart suit. It was a lucky as hell hand if he was human and just a lot of card counting on his end as far as the game really went. The UnSub had lost, and he had put all of his money into the pot. It was the best outcome.

"The table will take a break until all of the tables are done. Please, there is a smoking area at the back of the bar area," the dealer with a smile on his face, his hand pointing at where the door to the outside area was. Aaron watched as Morgan's team moved that way when Spencer's head flicked that direction after he looked right at Morgan.

Spencer got up from the table and opened up his cigarette case and took out the lighter he carried as well as a cigarette. A few at the table looked at the case, it had been a present from Aaron to Spencer and was made of platinum with various shades of purple gems set into it in the shape of an infinity symbol. Aaron had it custom made for Spencer as a present at Christmas. Spencer loved it. Spencer's gift had been a suit and various items to wear with that suit as well as a few day-to-day items for the suits that Aaron wore for work. Understated cufflinks, a tie pin that matched, as well as a pair of shoes. The items were personal with symbols on them that Aaron recognized were linked to Mimir. The average person wouldn't know that so Aaron was safe to wear them, but they laid a claim on Aaron that other Gods would recognize. The Old Gods would probably link Aaron to Ar and Aaron was okay with that. The New Gods would learn.

Jackson had stuck around in DC from October until Thanksgiving and then returned to the West Coast until the new building was done in DC. Aaron was not shocked that Jackson was setting up his new base of operations to be in DC after talking with the man and getting to know him. Mimir,
Jax, and Ar had been the best of friends from the moment they met. Aaron was shocked it had taken Jackson as long as it had for him to set up where Mimir was. Aaron wondered if something had happened between the two of them before Mimir had become Spencer and it was why Jackson had now followed him to DC. Aaron could tell where Spencer had lived before since Grimes Tech had started up as each time Jackson moved headquarters, it was where Spencer had gone. Even the one in Oklahoma was a bit strange, but the media had chalked it up to Jackson never being able to settle.

"He's good," Dave said behind him. Aaron nodded his head in agreement. "You know I'm constantly shocked by the things he does, but then I still see him a very young man. He's damned good at keeping that up."

"I think he's had to. He's still pretty tight-lipped about his past, but that's more that there is just so much of it and he would rather focus on the here and now. He's very...forward thinking when it comes to things. He doesn't dwell in the past."

"There is a lot of past to have to dwell in for him if he tried to. It could kill a lesser person. A lesser God." Dave patted Aaron on the shoulder.

The camera feed swapped to the outer area where Spencer as standing with his back to the doorway and he was smoking. Aaron felt his body respond to that image. Spencer smoking should not be as hot as it was. He had not ever found it hot in anyone else. It was the whole package, Spencer was usually so relaxed when he was smoking or stressed as hell. There was no real in between.

Spencer tensed just enough that Aaron recognized it as the UnSub entered the smoking area.

"Hey, can I have a smoke? I left mine at home; it seems." The UnSub stopped right where Spencer was, facing the same direction. The microphone that was outside was picking everything up perfectly.

"Sure." Spencer grabbed the case and pulled out a cigarette and handed it over to the UnSub before handing over the lighter as well. The UnSub lit the cigarette and handed the lighter back. It was a cheap Bic lighter that Aaron never kept track of how many he went through, it seemed though that Spencer had a new one every few weeks. He wasn't sure if that was Spencer loaning them to be to never get them back or losing them.

The UnSub took a few puffs before he exploded at Spencer. He was a mass of quick moving bulk as he tackled Spencer to the ground with his hands on Spencer's neck. Spencer didn't try and fight him.

"YOU TOOK MY LUCK!" The UnSub screamed as he started to choke Spencer with the intent to kill him. Spencer though was grinning at him. It was just seconds later that Morgan was there ripping the UnSub off of Spencer.

"There was no luck to steal. You are a pathetic human who doesn't understand anything about the world. You killed those who meant something to you so that you could try and get some more money. I pity humans like you." Spencer brushed off his suit and stepped out into the central part of the building. He found the man that was running the show and talked to him before pointing at where Morgan was coming in with the UnSub in cuffs. The man nodded and then moved away from Spencer. It was agreed upon that Spencer would tell them who would have actually won based on the stats of the changes in cards and various things that would happen while Spencer was manipulating the game with his card counting and they would move on based on that instead of Spencer or the UnSub. While that did not take bluffing into account, Aaron was pretty sure that Spencer could tell who would have won those parts as well.

Aaron exited the surveillance van to find that Spencer was leaving the building. He had another
cigarette lit and was inhaling on it deeply. Aaron waited to see where he was going before he followed behind him to check him over. Aaron figured that there would be bruises on his neck for a few days, but Spencer would heal up slowly. Aaron watched as Spencer leaned against the wall of a building to take a few puffs. His head was tipped up to look at the sky above, blocked a little by the fire escape on the side of the building.

"You okay?" Aaron asked.

"Yes. I am. I'm excited to get home. I'm going to smoke this, and then we can see about cracking the asshole."

"Sounds good. I'll have Prentiss stay behind and wait for you. I'm going to go with the UnSub to the station house and start the interrogation."

"That sounds like a good plan."

Spencer turned his head to look at Aaron, and there was something in his eyes that Aaron couldn't place. It sent a shiver down Aaron's spine though and promised him a good fucking.

Aaron dropped his briefcase on the stand inside the door. He looked around and his eyes settled on the dining room table that was directly across from the front door. It was set up for a meal but not a typical dinner. It looked like something from a movie of the big date between two characters. There was subtle lighting as well as candles and stark white roses. Aaron wondered on that, but he shut the door and looked for Spencer, who was not in sight at all. The door had been locked, so Spencer was either not there, or he was on the second floor somewhere.

Deciding to go on a hunt, Aaron started toward the stairs closest to the door. He began to strip his clothes off as he went, getting down to his undershirt and pants before he was all the way up the stairs. He found the bedroom dark except for the light from the bathroom. It lit up the clothes on the bed for him to change into. Aaron saw the note on the shirt and stepped up to read it. Spencer wanted him to shower and then get dressed, he could do that. He couldn't take the smile off of his face as he got ready for the meal that Spencer obviously had planned. It had smelled wonderful, but Aaron had been too focused on other things to really appreciate it.

As Aaron dressed he wondered at what the occasion was. It wasn't just the case going better than any of them thought. The UnSub, Curtis Banks, had spilled everything with a little prodding from Aaron. It had taken all night to go through it all though as Banks was very much off of his rocker using a term that Morgan had used once. Aaron wasn't sure if the man was going to considered sane enough to stand trial. Though Aaron knew that some killers needed help, Aaron wasn't sure that Banks was one that would get better with help and stay clean.

Aaron walked down the stairs and found that Spencer had returned from wherever he was. He was at the stove stirring something, and there was a bottle of wine breathing on the counter beside him. Aaron walked up behind him to find that Spencer was wearing a new cologne. Aaron dipped his head down to settle his nose right at Spencer's neck, and he inhaled. Aaron hardened at just that smell. He had never smelled it before on anyone or anything close to it at all.

"I can feel how much you like my new cologne for special occasions. You are not getting that until after we eat," Spencer said. He reached up and held Aaron's head still while he turned his head to get a short kiss.

"What's the special occasion?"

"An anniversary of sorts. The world might be celebrating Valentine's Day but for us, it's the first day
we met, given the change in the calendars and such throughout time, it settled on Valentine's Day."

"We met on this day?" Aaron stepped back when Spencer turned off the stove and spun to face him. Spencer reached up and cupped the sides of Aaron's face to nuzzle their noses together.

"Yes. Now go sit, and I'll get dinner ready for us to eat." Spencer pressed a kiss to the corner of Aaron's mouth before turning him around forcibly. Aaron walked to where Spencer wanted and settled in at the table where he usually sat. There was wine glasses as well as water glasses. Aaron picked up one and took a sip. Spencer walked over and filled the wine glasses more than what was standard, but he settled the bottle into the ice bucket in the center of the table. He left again, and Aaron picked up the wine to smell it, but he didn't drink it. He set it back down as Spencer brought over two huge plates. Aaron saw what the stuff in the pan on the stove was, it was a glaze that was over the meat and the potatoes. The meat was an even mix of chicken and steak. There was a pile of rainbow cauliflower as well as what looked like grilled squash, zucchini, and carrots. He speared one of the carrots and found that it was cooked but still firm. The favorite way for him to eat them.

"This looks very good, Spencer, thank you." Aaron put the carrot into his mouth and chewed. It tasted really good. "It tastes good too."

"And you haven't even tried the meat or the potatoes." Spencer was blushing though at the compliment.

Aaron speared a potato and chewed it. The glaze was very good, not bland but not over spiced either. Aaron really enjoyed it. The steak was cooked perfectly, and so was the chicken. Overall, it was a damned good meal that while it looked like it had a lot of work put into it, it was simple as well. Something that Aaron liked a lot.

They made small talk as they ate and the wine flowed free until there was none left. Spencer topped off their glasses with the last just as they were cleaning their plates. Aaron saved it for after he was done. He finished while Spencer had a few bites of potato left.

"So what other plans do you have for us?" Aaron asked as he sipped at the last of his wine. He felt a little warm, which he hadn't had happened with regular wine. Aaron grabbed the bottle and looked at it, finding the stamp on the corner that said that it did affect Gods. "Other than getting drunk."

"It won't get either of us drunk," Spencer said before he drained his wine. He dropped the glass to the table before getting up. He walked around the corner of the table to get close to Aaron. Aaron turned his chair to the side, and Spencer sat down across his lap, legs spread. He leaned in but didn't touch their lips together. "It will just make us a little lusty is all. A true aphrodisiac for Gods."

"Like we need that help," Aaron said, and he pressed their lips together. He wrapped an arm around Spencer's waist to hold him close before burying his hand into Spencer's locks, feeling a little bit of some kind of product to keep his hair looking good. Aaron didn't say he was sorry for that. Instead, he just pulled Spencer's head down to kiss him thoroughly. It felt good, feeling the burn of the alcohol in his blood and the sheer happiness at what he was feeling with Spencer in his arms.

Hours later, Aaron was laying on his side in bed with Spencer stretched on his stomach in front of him. They were both still naked but fresh from their second shower of the night. Aaron was tracing the Phoenix tattoo that was on Spencer's back. It was pretty, and Aaron liked to do it. Spencer was still like he was asleep, but Aaron knew that he was not. They had good sex but not Earth-shattering like they would need a nap.

"Where is Jack?" Aaron leaned over and kissed the tip of a Phoenix wing.
"Jessica offered to take him. He was excited after being sickly for as long as he has been. She's going to drop him off in the morning. I know that we have the day off so I thought we could do some shopping for food for the next little while and maybe go to the museum that Jack has been wanting to go to after he gets off of school. I told her that we could make sure Jack got to school. She doesn't need to worry about that."

"You adapted well to having a child living with you full time. I expected something of a fuss, and then I remembered that you all but took care of Jack all the time when he was a baby, and I was asleep."

"When I've been tired before of life and being the kind of God that I was, I would disappear for a while. I'd become a caretaker to a family, usually for free. Some low on her luck woman who had lost her husband or a man who lost his wife. One time it was an Uncle who lost his twin brother and his brother's wife in one go and was the one to take in the five kids that they had. He loved those kids, but he wasn't ready for being a parent of any kind to them. I stay until I am better or they don't need me anymore. If I still need them, then I find another family. I like kids, and over the years I've gotten used to them. I used to hate them, they freaked me out. It used to make you laugh. Some of the other Goddesses would just give kids to me, and I didn't know what to do with them."

Aaron pressed a kiss to the top of Spencer's spine and then laid down, wrapped around Spencer. That warmth was still there because Spencer ran hotter than Aaron. It was nice, something left over from before, something that Aaron had loved.

"One day you'll tell me exactly how old you are, one day when I am ready, I will ask."

"And I'll tell you. When you are ready to ask things, I'll tell them to you, Aaron. I don't keep things from you to hurt you. I do it because I don't think you are ready. I'll tell you what you need to know when instances pop up that make you need to know things before it's time." Spencer stretched, and he rocked his hips upward. Aaron laughed and shifted to where he was straddling Spencer's body. If Spencer wanted to play, Aaron could play.
Chapter 27

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

For some Humans, the Devil is in everything that they do. He is their motive for every single action they complete in their life whether that action is for good or for ill. It's interesting to watch those who live the word of their God and try not to do anything that would draw the attention of the Devil, and yet they condemn those who are different from them, which is precisely the opposite of what their God wanted them to do. I've had many conversations with the Devil because, of course, Humans created him as well and then tried to turn him into something that he was not, an Angel, even a Fallen Angel. Because in their eyes no God could be evil. No God could do what the Devil did. The myth and the legend spread, and unlike me, the Devil gained more and more names in every version of the religion that spread out from it and there came a new form of the Devil. Gods get bored, and Gods do what they want, especially when one is old as the Devil. It's no surprise to come across a tendril of him in the world while I am out living my own life.

April 2012

April 2012

Aaron wasn't sure what they were doing back at the Heathridge Manor. He was behind Spencer as Spencer knocked on the door. Lara had been returned back to the manor and into the hands of the staff who were going to be her caretakers until she was old enough to do that on her own. Aaron had his doubts on whether she would ever be fully stable enough to live alone, but at least she would have the staff and the other's who oversaw the money that was in her name to make sure that she maybe didn't end up like her mother.

"I'm sorry, but Miss Heathridge is busy with another guest at the moment, Agents," the butler said as he looked Spencer like Spencer was the dirt under his feet. Aaron wondered what he would do if he found out that Spencer had more money than the Heathridge's did.

"Yes, tell her guest that I am here to see him but that I will gladly see him with Miss Heathridge around."

The butler narrowed his eyes as Spencer but bowed his head. He shut the door not allowing them inside and even locked it, Aaron snorted at that.

"Some of the Old Gods can create children," Spencer said off-handed.

"You said that..."

"Everything depends on exactly what Humans wanted from them when they were created. There was a time when I was Seshat that I could have. When the worship of Seshat started to go down, I lost it but I never really cared either way. I never wanted children."

"Kids that are born..."

"Depends on what the Gods wants. The Greek Gods are perfect little showings of that, aren't they? Zeus especially."

The butler came back and said nothing as he waved them into the house. Spencer gave the man a downright feral grin as he passed by him. Aaron almost wanted to tell him to be good, but this place was different. Aaron had found Spencer the night before on the roof of the station they were working
out of and he had been sitting and smoking, smoking a lot by the pile of butts that were in the ashtray that was beside him. He had been staring out into the city when Aaron had stepped up to him.

It was two hours after Aaron had sat down that Spencer had finally talked, but he'd spoken about nothing too big, just a few things he wanted to do with the apartments that were going to empty when the term ended. How he wanted to work on them during the summer for the kids who were going to be coming back. For once all the college kids were graduating at the same time, so the apartments were going to be empty.

The sun had risen with Spencer silent again. He had dragged Aaron with him to a diner where they had talked about what they wanted to do when they got back to DC before they had come to Heathridge Manor to do who knew what.

Aaron looked at the man who was on the couch with Lara Heathridge. He was beautiful in a way that Spencer was, it wasn't what a typical man would look like, not enough muscle and too much pretty but he was a walking temptation.

"Welcome, Agents Hotchner and Reid, please, have a seat. Is there something else that I can help you with?" Lara asked. She was smiling in a way that Aaron had not seen her do since he had met her. She looked really happy.

"Actually, Miss Heathridge, I am here to talk to your guest, and Agent Hotchner is just accompanying me," Spencer said, but he didn't look away from where he was looking at the guest to the house. The man smiled, and Aaron felt it. He knew that it was a God. Aaron had not learned the difference between what New Gods and Old Gods felt like and he might never. There were a lot of older New Gods that never could. "How are you, Tom?"

"You still insist on calling me that, Ir?" Tom asked as he leaned forward. He looked every bit the God that Aaron thought him to be, but Aaron wasn't sure what kind of God he was or what he was the God of.

"Isn't that what you are, an old Tom cat?" Spencer asked. He took a seat in the tall wingback chair that was at the edge of the room. Aaron wasn't sure where to stand, so he walked behind it. He was able to rest his arms on the chair and settle there. Spencer looked up at him, and there was such a look of love on his face. When he looked back down though that look disappeared.

"I've settled down in my ways on that," Tom said.

"That's because the family nearly died off, this is all that's left." Spencer looked at Lara. He gave her a smile. "Have you ever thought about soulmates, Lara?"

"James called me stupid for believing in them."

"You are not stupid. What do you know of the Old Gods and of the New Gods?"

"Very little. James kept me from learning a lot of things that I think that I need to know." Spencer looked at Tom.

"I'll get her into a private school and make sure that she has the help that she needs," Tom said as he stood up. He straightened the suit that he was wearing. He gave Lara a bow before he knelt in front of her and took her real arm into his to kiss the back of her hand. He did the same with the prosthetic arm that she had. "I'll make sure that you want for nothing, my dear."

"He calls you Tom, but you called yourself Draco." Lara looked very confused but also at peace.
"Tom is a very old nickname between my friend and I. I will see you soon my dear." Tom stood up and pressed a kiss to Lara's forehead. Her eyes closed and she looked so very happy. He turned to look at Spencer. "You always show up when she's reborn."

"I do and I always will, Draco." Spencer nodded his head as Draco, as it seemed Spencer was going to call him now, bowed at him.

Draco left the room, and Spencer focused on Lara.

"This is the tenth time that you have been born, Lara Heathridge. You've had other names, last ones that is, but you've always been a form of the name Lara, and in fact, you were the first child to be named Lara as it's spelled for your current name. My true name is nothing that you need to know, but I am an Old God, just like Draco is. He was cursed by another God a very long time ago. He will have his soulmate die and die again but always come back. Some of your lives you have lived to a very old age only to be taken from him, and others it's short. How long you two have together is never dictated by that God."

"Why?"

"That God said that he could never love but that if he ever did find long, he would lose them time and time again. That other God is long gone, his worship is dead and gone. He faded to nothing while Draco has lived on."

"What's he the God of?" Lara asked.

"That's a little..." Spencer scrunched up his face. "You've never asked that question before. It's better to say that he's not the God of anything. His worship is a little different as he does not have Humans who worship him, well not a lot. It's not quite fear that keeps him alive either. Human thought created Gods, and Human thought has kept them alive. Humans think a lot about him. James and your mother were right that the Devil was coming for you but not like they thought that he would. Draco loves you dearly and has for a very long time. He'll make sure that you are cared for and have everything that you need. I know that you've missed out on school but there is a lot about life that you need to learn and a private school would be best. There are several in this area that are good, and you'll still be able to hang out with your friends."

"He was the Devil?" Lara asked she looked a little overwhelmed.

Aaron felt overwhelmed as well. The Devil. That was the Devil that his mother had feared so much. The Devil that his father had said was inside of him. Aaron wondered if his father had known more than he should. Aaron gripped the back of the chair that was leaning against and thought about the fact that he had been in the room with the Devil. Spencer knew him well enough to joke with him and call him a Tomcat. The Devil had a soulmate that had been the victim in a case.

"He was, and he's a sweetie. I'm sure that you'll find a few new friends popping up here and there to help you as you adjust to your new view on life."

"What if I don't love him?" Lara asked.

"Then he'll be the best friend that you have. You've had a life like that. None of us found you before you were brutally abused by a group of men as James had died before he could protect you. You could not stand the thought of touching anyone ever for any reason, so he stayed by your side and protected you. He loves you, no matter who you are, no matter what has happened."

"Why did my mom and James do what they did?"
"Because there are humans who are sensitive to the eddy and flows of the things that move around them and they knew. Your mother was very gifted; I would say and never learned how to control it."

Aaron jumped when he heard scratching behind him, and he turned to see a Pixie was at the window. Spencer stood up and walked to the window and opened it allow the Pixie to enter the room. It flew over to Lara and landed on her knee.

"Morlock," Lara said with a grin on her face. She picked the Pixie up and rubbed her face on his own. The Pixie made a trilling noise. "You've been gone a very long time."

"James could see me, and so I stayed where no one could see me, not even you. I've missed you, Miss Lara."

"I've missed you as well."

"He was your nanny Pixie back when it was nothing big to have ones that lived for years and years in families."

Morlock turned to face Spencer and Aaron saw that he was covered in scars. He looked like he had seen a lot of fights and Aaron wondered how many of those were in response to protecting Lara.

"I have my Lara now, thank you Master Ir."

"You are very welcome. I'm just glad that I could still find you. This world is huge, and we are so small." Spencer stood up and he held his hand out to Aaron and Aaron took it, allowing Spencer to pull it up and tuck it into the crook of his arm. "Morlock has ways of getting a hold of me, and I do have your phone number for the house here, Miss Heathridge. If you need anything, even just a person to talk to about what has happened to you at the hands of James and to deal with your mother, and her legacy, I can do that. I could even get here pretty damned quick a few times. I'm leaving her in your hands, Morlock."

"I'll find Peaches if I need you."

"Peaches belongs to Aaron now, he has claimed him, but I am sure that Peaches will gladly pass on the message." Spencer stepped up to Lara and pressed her to stay seated as he brushed at the hair on her forehead. "You'll have a happy life, and I'll make sure of it. You've had enough to deal with in life already."

"Thank you for everything," Lara said. She pushed up and wrapped her arms around Spencer.

Aaron watched as Spencer floundered with what he was supposed to be doing. He wrapped his arms around her and patted at her back like he used to do to JJ and even Morgan when they forced hugs on him. Aaron stepped up and disengaged them. Lara looked like she was happy, even with what she had known about her family, about her life. It was sending Aaron's head spinning, but it seemed there was some kind of magic working on her, helping her know who was safe and who was not.

"You can always get a hold of the BAU. There is a list of people who we have helped that are directed to our numbers with no issue," Aaron said. He handed over his personal card as well. He knew that Spencer didn't like to do it.

The butler showed them out of the house, and this time he looked a lot happier to see them. As they were shown out, Aaron lifted his cell phone from his pocket to call Morgan to come and pick them up, but he saw that there was a limo outside. The back door opened with no one touching it and Spencer waved Aaron forward. Aaron swallowed, but he walked toward it and got inside. The Devil was sitting there on the seat that was closest to the partition while Aaron wasn't sure where Spencer
would want to sit, so he perched on the edge of the seat that stretched across the back of the limo. Spencer got inside and sat down right beside him, sliding all the way back in the seat, so Aaron did as well.

"She's been hidden from me. Usually, I can find her and watch her from a distance as she grows up, since that time. I'm glad your team got here. Morlock felt you arrive and then he came and found me, finding that link between us."

"I told you that it would come in handy at some point," Spencer said.

The Devil handed over a glass of something that had bubbles in it. It looked like it was peach colored. Spencer took it and sipped it before Aaron was handed one as well. Aaron sniffed at it before taking a sip.

"Training a young one?" The Devil asked as he leaned back in his seat and laid an ankle across his knee. He looked like the perfect example of power. Aaron took another sip of drink before he forced himself to relax. The Devil had not taken his eyes off of him.

"Something like that."

"Well, it seems that this time we don't get to have a rough and tumble before I found Lara."

"Rough and tumbles are off the menu forever, Draco," Spencer said before he drained his drink. He looked at the glass for a few seconds before it started to fill back up. "For all, they tout of their power because they don't survive on worship, I think that some New Gods don't understand what power really is."

"You've been looking quite healthy. Though between the three of us, I think you have more power than G and I, that's the truth of it though ain't it? Knowledge is everything."

"I've always had more power I just never cared to show it. I could destroy this world and render it to ash and still live to shape the creatures that come after. I have enough power stored and enough worship that I don't think I could ever die."

"And that's why G hates you." The Devil gave Spencer a smile, but before he could say anything else, a phone started to ring. A phone appeared in the Devil's hand, and he answered it, without saying a word into it. He listened for a few minutes before he lowered it. "She'll be enrolled in whatever school she wants."

"I gave Morlock information on that, and I figure that they can decide. She may want your opinion. As always I expect that you'll do what's best for her and not what's best for your cock. Twenty-one. You've met her too late in life, so you have to wait until she's twenty-one for you to dip your wick as some say."

"I know. I agreed to your rules a long time ago. I won't backtrack on them now. We are at your hotel."

Aaron looked out and saw that they were indeed in front of their hotel. He looked back at the Devil and saw that he was looking out at the steps of the hotel through a window in the middle of the limo. Aaron looked and saw that the team was waiting out there for them. Spencer opened the limo door and waved Aaron out. He followed seconds later, not enough time for him to say or do a thing. Spencer didn't shut the door though. He leaned back, and Aaron couldn't hear what he said at that point. Aaron did hear the Devil's response, and that was a full belly laugh. The limo pulled away before Spencer even got the door shut all the way. Aaron watched as it shut when it was about
fifteen feet away.

"You look like you saw a ghost," Dave said as he stepped up to them. His eyes were on Spencer and Aaron looked, and he agreed that Spencer looked a lot like he did that night that Aaron had become a God.

"Or the Devil," Morgan said. "Mom used to say that instead of a ghost. That we looked like the Devil had stepped into our shadow."

"Well, that's because that was the Devil in that limo."

"Fuck," Morgan said, and he looked at where the limo was going around a corner. "Are you serious Reid?"

"Very. I think I would like to leave as soon as possible." Spencer looked at JJ who nodded her head and unhooked her cell phone from its case at her belt. She dialed a number and turned her back to the team to walk a few feet away.

Aaron acted like Spencer did, but this was not an act. He hadn't thought much about God and the Devil since learning about the fact that the Gods were real. He hadn't thought about it after he had become one. The jet ride home was quick, or at least it felt that way given that Aaron had run through everything that his parents had ever said about the Devil during his childhood.

The jet touched down, and everyone went to the office to get the paperwork done so they could all go home and try and deal with everything from the case. No one had been shocked that Spencer had linked the writing on the wall to Satanic things but for Aaron to meet and like the Devil. Aaron just hoped that the man didn't decide to show up. Aaron wasn't sure that he could deal with the man being in their home for long. Aaron had adjusted to Jackson being there on occasion, but Jackson knew about boundaries and kept to them. Aaron wasn't sure the same could be said about the Devil. Aaron would have to ask about that.

Spencer was waiting for Aaron at the driver's side of the car. Aaron wondered why Spencer wanted to be the one to drive. Spencer was buckled into the car by the time that Aaron was getting in. He turned the car on and waited for Aaron to buckle before he started to pull out of the spot. They had arrived early when they had got to work for the case, so Aaron had been able to back into the spot instead of pulling in.

"You have a few questions, and they've been burning in your eyes. I thought that you could ask and I could answer while we drove home."

"Not so much questions I just...their life was a little like Spencer's except Spencer stayed with Diana. Disregarding everything with Draco or whatever he likes to be called. That could have been Spencer, but he would not have had a brother or support to take care of him. What do you think would have happened to him if that had happened?"

"There was a lot that would have changed because, by the time that his father left, he was already marked a near-God. If he had gone into foster care, he probably would have never become a God. He would have been stunted on that front. If he had gone with his father, I shudder to think what could have happened to him. You might have chased him and had to kill him or put him into jail. Intelligence needs room to grow, and William Reid would never have allowed it to grow. He would have shoved it down into a little hole and let it fester under the weight of needing his son to be the typical male."

"And we never would have met," Aaron said.
"I can't believe that," Spencer said. He stopped at a stop sign within the City of Quantico and looked at Aaron. He gave Aaron a small, sad smile. "While we are Gods, we've adapted to that name, there is no proof that it is what we are. We are figments of the imagination of humans, I know that but there is something that created us. I can't and refuse to call it a God."

Spencer looked forward and started to drive again when nothing else came to the four-way stop. Aaron reached over and linked their hands on the gear shift that Spencer always rested his hand on in the center of the car. Spencer's smile broke on his face, and he was grinning a little more.

"I was drawn to this in more ways than one and that whatever entity, force, or being that created Gods where there were none could not have been meaning to take Ar away just to never have us find each other again."

"I'm glad of that but what if we are meant to be like Draco and Lara?" Aaron asked because he had that thought and he hated it.

"Then I'll find you time and time again and enjoy whatever time I have with you. Every single second that I spend with you is worth; however it long it would take to find you again. I would do anything to find you again now that I know that you are going to come back. I had hope after meeting up with Draco, and we found Lara the first time together after she had been killed. If you were taken from me again, I would hunt the world for you. I'd find you as a child because now that I'm a distance away from it, I know what attracted me to you and I'll find you."

"That should be a little scary. Kind of like that one song about every breath you take but I just kind of find it hot. Let's go home and figure out dinner before Jack gets it in his head that he needs macaroni and cheese again."

Spencer laughed, and his shoulder relaxed. Aaron knew that they would talk about a few other things on the way home, but at least Aaron's thoughts weren't swimming on just how easy it would have been for them to never meet in his life.
Chapter 28

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

There are very few things out there that are harder to take than the knowledge that moment in your life has robbed you of your future. There was a reason why when the Gods were old, and they were plenty they never talked much with the humans. If one never knew that one could become a God, then there was nothing missed when it didn't happen.

The New Gods do not live by this standard. They would rather know who their new "friends" were going to be than to have a new upstart come into their life that they didn't like. Then there is the fact that just knowing that one is to become a God can change the fact that one can become a God because the way that the person lives their life changes.

A few do an act so horrible that the bits of themselves that would have made them become a God go away. I see that in so many people. They blame everything but themselves for what they have lost even though the blame only rests solely at their feet.

October 2012

Aaron had never been anywhere but home, or out on a case on Halloween night. He looked around the bar that was full of things that were decidedly not Human and felt that Prentiss just might be the only Human in the place. There was all manner of creatures in the bar and Spencer had been the one to choose it after Prentiss had said that after Jack was asleep after trick or treating, she wanted to go out. Spencer had given her an address and told her to just give his name if she got there before them. She had not, but Spencer had been at the bar getting drinks for the three of them when she had arrived.

So far only silence had been the companion at the table after Spencer and Aaron had regaled Prentiss about Jack's fun trick or treating with a group of kids from New Haven that he had made friends with. Aaron really liked Jack's friends, and he was glad that Jack was making them very easy at New Haven, even if he had been there a few years at this point. There were a few of the teachers who had known exactly who he was because the name Hotchner wasn't exactly popular in the area, so Jack had to be part of that case that had got a lot of attention when Aaron had brought charges up against Haley.

"So," Spencer said as he came back to the table with the third round of drinks. They were all drinking things that would not get any of them drunk. Prentiss found a wine that was God made that only got Gods drunk that she liked while Aaron was drinking regular scotch and Spencer brandy. Spencer settled in at Aaron's side in the four-person booth, looking at Prentiss across the table. "What did you want to talk to us about?"

"A lot of things really," Prentiss started. She picked at her nail bed on her thumb.

Aaron looked at the nail and saw that it wasn't bleeding or anything. He knew that her nervous habit was to bite, chew, and pick at them until they bleed.

"Doyle's death was broadcast far and wide within intelligence communities the world over, the fact that he was Valhalla was hushed up, but the death of Valhalla was also broadcast a little while after. Those who knew that they were one in the same have kind of faded away. I feel free in a way that I have not in a long while, but I have been questioning my place on this team if it's good for me and
really, I don't want to be anywhere else."

"Even with Easter offering you a Unit Chief position in Interpol?" Spencer asked after he took a sip of his brandy.

"I was tempted when he offered it, but I don't want to be anywhere else other than where I am. I don't mind at all being here and being with the team is good. The thing with Doyle could have gone wrong in so many ways. I understand why you got onto Morgan about doing stupid stuff and acting like the team would never have his back. I did the same thing, but all you did was tell me to do better."

"We had to look at Easter with a weather eye, and we were not sure for a while if he was the mole that sold everyone on the team to Doyle or not. You had to do the same and had to question us as well. You never thought that your team that went after Doyle would betray you. They knew better than us what kind of man he was. The circumstances for the two are vastly different. He didn't trust us when we had given him no reason. You had outside influences robbing you of someone who you had trusted with your life. Was I upset that you didn't trust us? Yes. Do I think you'll do it again? No. Morgan would have if I hadn't called him to the carpet for it." Aaron understood what had to be going through Prentiss's mind at that point and he knew well how it felt to have the world ripped out for under your feet.

"But that team was never a family like this one is. None of you would ever do anything that would harm one of us in that way. You would rather die than give any of us up to be killed." Prentiss looked at Spencer and back at her drink before he looked at Aaron again. "Doyle was obsessed with Mimir. He had the journals that Mimir had published through a publishing house. At one point he tried to find out who Mimir was hiding as in the world. I thought that he wanted the knowledge that Mimir had, but it was after everything happened with his death that I realized that he wanted him as his captive. He wanted to keep him forever. He had journals of people from when paper was just invented forward that detailed Mimir, what he looked like, what he acted like, things that would be easy to pick out about him. He was obsessed, and he was a danger to Mimir and Mimir had to know that. I've read Mimir's journals. I met a lady a few weeks back at that event where they were doing readings from the journals. If I had left to go to Interpol, I never would have met her. I could see myself falling in love with her."

"That's good," Aaron said. He tried to slot Prentiss into the bisexual set in his mind and found that she was already there. Prentiss did seem like she was very much in the whole thing that she liked the inside and didn't care much about the outside. He hoped that everything worked well with the woman, Prentiss was ready to put down roots and sometimes a relationship, even if it failed after a while was a good way to start to set down roots. "I know you and Morgan had been looking at brownstones."

"I found one that I like that doesn't have foundation issues like the other. I'm glad that I had an in-depth look at Reid's prompting. We are getting off track of where I wanted to go through," Prentiss said as she glanced at Spencer. "I read the things that Doyle had on Mimir and Easter got me access to them again in the wake of his death. Interpol took everything, but given that he was not limited by geography at all I can understand. I remember a part of an entry in the journal of a lover that Mimir took about two hundred years ago. The young man was a good artist and drew the tattoo that was on Mimir's back. It's what Doyle was going to use to find him. The tattoo is very detailed, and while it could have been updated over the years, it was not like it could be changed unless there was evidence form the removal."

Aaron thought about Spencer's tattoo. Aaron loved tracing the edges and the feathers of it as they laid in bed when they were resting instead of sleeping. Spencer still had to take pills on occasion to
get the rest that his mind needed.

"When I saw the image, I knew that I had seen it somewhere and it took until last week to remember where. It was brief and once just a quick glance. I came to your guys' room, and Reid was getting dressed after his shower. He moved quickly away as you opened the door Hotch, but I saw it. Is that why you killed him?"

Aaron didn't look at Spencer. He would let him handle it on whether Prentiss knew who Spencer really was.

"No, because if he had come after I would have killed him, but I did not want him coming after you again. I could give a fuck about Easter but you, you are my family. I cannot stand for someone to harm anyone on this damned team, and I lay that blame on Aaron's feet. If hadn't fallen in love with him I never would have cared about the team as much as I do."

"No dodging at all? Nothing about how much you love knowledge, and you got the tattoo after finding out that Mimir had it?"

"Thought about all the ways I could dodge it all?" Spencer was grinning.

"It's the best way to approach something like this. Making sure that you've thought about all the angles, especially if someone is as good a liar as Reid's been over the years. We've all seen your file, the FBI knew that Reid was going to become a God. How in the hell did you step in?"

"When the accident happened. I stepped in as young Spencer and have just kind of grown up after that. We Gods, especially the older ones, can shapeshift when we want. The Greek myths of Zeus were not all fiction," Spencer said with a grin a waggle of his eyebrows. Prentiss started to laugh.

"I don't need to think of a God turning into a swan or a tree to seduce people," Prentiss said.

Aaron looked at her. Really and carefully looked at her. She looked settled in a way that Aaron had never seen in her before. She didn't seem like she was one foot out the door like she had been since Strauss had put her on the team. Morgan wasn't that settled yet, but he wasn't one foot out the door. Aaron figured that it wouldn't be long before he actually settled down with someone. Aaron wanted that for him. He wanted Morgan to finally be happy and have put the past behind him.

"You don't even know half of what the sex-crazed God did to lure someone to him. He was a fucking pest and I kind of hated him."

"No, you didn't kind of hate him, you really hated him," Aaron said. He waved for Spencer to get up and Spencer did so that Aaron could go and get more drinks. He walked to where the bartender was and ordered more for all three of them. None of them took long as they were all just straight pours, but there were a few people in front of him. He dropped the correct bill onto the bar and waited for his drinks to get done. Aaron looked up where there was a movie playing on the TV with the sound off and the captions on. He was used to Spencer watching the news like that. He had done it with Jack sleeping on his chest as he read over the words instead of having it make noise. Especially when Jack was sick with the croup over and over again.

"Here you go," the bartender said as he set the three drinks down and picked up the money. Aaron juggled the drinks to where he could carry them and turned around. He nearly dropped all three when he saw who was standing at the table with Spencer and Prentiss. Aaron tried not to let his dander show as he walked up to the table. Spencer scooted in on the booth and Dev moved to sit there, but Aaron darted around him and set the drinks down. Dev looked up at him in shock.
"You!" Dev said, and he sounded very pissed off.

"Well, Spencer did say that he was here with his lover, Dev," Prentiss said with a smile on her face. Dev glared at her. "I have a gun and license, and I am sure between the three of us and everyone here that we could think of a reason for me to kill you."

Dev didn't back up, and Aaron saw the glint in his eyes. Aaron looked at people who were standing around, and Aaron saw that the bar used the same method for identifying humans and Near Gods as the club. Aaron looked down at Prentiss's wrist to see the band, but Dev's wrist was blank, other than the band saying he was a Human, not Near God anymore. Aaron looked at Spencer who was staring at Dev.

"It's his damned fault that I'm not a near God anymore," Dev shouted to the room. There were a lot of people that turned toward them, and Aaron wondered what they were thinking. Aaron wasn't sure if Dev was pointing at Aaron or Spencer, but when Spencer sighed, Aaron knew it was Spencer. Aaron knew the sigh well. It was Spencer's sigh that he was done with shit and things were about to get real.

"It's your own damn fault," Spencer said and after he said that he downed what was left in his brandy before grabbing the one that Aaron had bought for him. He used it to point at Dev. His voice was louder than it normally would be. It was loud enough that everyone could be able to hear him, especially when the volume of the music was cut down. "You decided that the full and enthusiastic consent of more than one person was not something that you wanted. If it weren't for the fact that everyone stopped you before you could do something illegal, you would be in jail. You used the fact that Near Gods didn't know what they were to abuse their trust and kindness. You used your knowledge to hurt someone that meant a lot to me, and you are damned lucky all I did was break a single bone in your body. If I see you around him or I again, you will be put in traction for at least six months."

Dev lost all color on his face and backed away from them. He left the bar quickly. There was nothing but silence for a long while until the music was turned back up and conversation started elsewhere. Aaron didn't look at Prentiss, he stayed looking down at his drink. Aaron had debated pressing charges, but there had been nothing that he had done that had actually crossed the line. He could have easily said he was putting Aaron to bed to sleep it off. He was a horrible predator that was going to cross a line one day.

"He has seven Pixies that watch him that have stuck around after their child has grown out of being around them. He doesn't do anything that isn't reported to an Old God who works on MPD. The moment he crosses a line he can be put in jail for, he will be. He's not going to hurt anyone else."

"Who did he try and rape?" Prentiss asked.

"At least three people that we know of. The thing is that the friend of mine that it nearly happened to was the first we caught him in. He could have done it for a while before and we can't prove it. So we just watch him and talk to as many former paramours of his that we can."

"So he's not a Near God anymore?" Aaron asked.

"No," Spencer answered. He shook his head and took a sip of his brandy. He looked down at Aaron's drink and looked a little green around the gills.

"It's just Human scotch, Spencer. I promise." Aaron reached under the table and laid his hand on Spencer's knee and squeezed it.
"How many Near Gods have been stopped from becoming Gods because of something like that?"

"Power corrupts," Spencer said. He swirled his brandy in the glass and looked up at the side of the table where Dev had been.

"Sorry, Doc. I looked at the footage, and he slipped in with that party that came in an hour ago. He took a booth, and the waitress who has been serving him didn't recognize him. We are going to make sure that everyone is briefed on it again and set up a new camera at the side of the door so that all face coming in will be caught, no matter what." The bartender looked upset and more than a little afraid.

"It's fine. Mistakes happen. I'm just glad that he decided to confront us than to try and seduce someone else. Make sure to report this," Spencer said, and he gave the bartender a smile.

"I will be. I'll make sure that I call the number tonight." The bartender gave a little bow and stepped back.

"So you guys try and police yourself as much as possible?" Prentiss asked.

"There are a few us Old Gods who are good at spotting issues before they become issues. We've seen a lot of shit and history repeats itself. We police Humans as well but make sure that the cops are called in on all. Even Ares hated most people who committed crimes, especially using his name to do it in war. He killed a lot of people in judgment and never allowed them off the battlefield when he was around."

"Someday I want to just sit and listen to you talk about the Old Gods who are gone and what they really did instead of the myths."

"Then that would mostly be the Gods who are not that important. Humans have made themselves believe that all of the Old Gods are gone. Many have just got really good at hiding. I would never talk about the Gods who are still alive in public places, but I would do something with just us. Jack likes the stories so maybe a dinner. My publishing house wants me to do one of those things where I basically do a talk show. I can do an accent well enough to where I could hide that it was Spencer Reid doing it, but that would paint a bigger picture on my back. My journals only mention the other Gods in abstract ways. It's mainly the Humans who I talk about."

"Morgan's going to be upset with you, you know."

"JJ and Garcia as well. They are the only ones who don't know," Spencer said. He set his drink down and relaxed back into the seat; he closed his eyes and smiled a little. "They will get over it or they won't. Rossi figured out that I wasn't a New God in Florida when I smote that fucker."

"And when he starts to call people fuckers that means that he's mentally worn out," Aaron said. He drained his drink and picked up Spencer's, but he stole it back from him.

"I'm fine. I just...It's not the first time that someone has blamed me for their own actions when it's stopped them from becoming a God. It's when the power that we get doesn't recognize what the darkness is in someone and they snap that the BAU is called in to chase down the New Gods when they go on killing sprees. It's harder and harder to see the potential in New Gods when they are damaged. I see the damage and not the potential. I've killed a few over the years that I can see what they would do if they became Gods. There was a young man who had never acted on his impulses, but he would have if he had become a God. We would have had a child rapist who cared nothing but for the screams. His body was never found, and after the issues, he had caused his family never really looked for him and assumed that he ran away. I plan on having the power I am using to keep
Humans away fade slowly, and it'll be found by a hunter or something. It's set up to look like he was
climbing a tree and fell out and broke his neck and nature just kind of covered him up."

Spencer sat up fully and drained his brandy. "Let's head home, and I'll see if Stormy is up for a
cuddle because Jack's in bed. Or I'll crawl in bed with Jack," Spencer said as he waved for Aaron to
get out of the booth. Aaron got up and sat back down once Spencer was gone.

"Has it really dawned on him that he's a father to Jack?" Prentiss asked.

"Not really. Though I think part of that is Jack still calling him Spencer. I think that with a little
prodding, Jack could change that. He's called him Spencer for so long that I don't Jack even thinks
that he has other options."

"When does Haley get out?"

"Later this year. December sometime. I will get a notification. I already have the school being
warned about it. She got the max sentence on her appeal which was the case, and she knew that it
could happen when she filed for that. The Judge was not happy that she threatened to kill Spencer in
the appeal court date. He looked at her callous disregard for the life of the kids that she aborted. He
agreed that she lied about that to get me. She knew I wanted kids, but she wanted the money and
prestige that marrying me gave her, so she lied and did it the best way she knew how just getting rid
of the pregnancy. If she had been on birth control, I never would have known. I didn't care about her
doctor's appointments, not up until we started to figure out why we weren't getting pregnant. If she
would do that to a child that she made, she could attempt to kill anyone the Judge said, and even
though Spencer's a God, there are the bystanders that could be hurt in the process. That's why he put
her where he did and why he made sure she was going to be there as long as she was. She lost all of
her parole hearings. I'm not that afraid if she comes to our house. Tough getting Spencer to lock the
door and set the alarm at night is sometimes a little hard. I'll have to work on that."

"He lives in his own little world. Most people would not rob a New God, or an Old one, probably
more not robbing an Old one. Though no one knows that he's an old one."

"You forget about Jin and Petal. I live in fear of them ever thinking that I am hurting Spencer. I have
no clue how old they are compared to him, but they treat him like their child, and they scare the shit
out of me."

Prentiss laughed, and Aaron kind of wished there was something at the table to throw at her.

"So Morgan has admitted to having nightmares from the case. Being buried alive to feed plants to
save his kids. Which I know he doesn't have but still, it's kind of freaky, and Reid treated it like
normal which I can understand, but he was cold as ice."

"Psychologically he understands her. There is a reason he hides as the New God of Psychology. He
can do it easily. When you break people down like that, they are not that scary." Aaron knew that he
had kept Jack a little closer the night before when they had got home from the case, and that was
why Spencer wanted to cuddle with Jack tonight. Aaron looked and found that Spencer was talking
to a person at the bar. He was not wearing anything on his wrists, so Aaron assumed he was a God.

"Maybe have Reid go into a tangent on it next week or something when someone above kicks his
file back because it's either too big or not big enough."

"I think he does it on purpose based on whose going over them above me. Cruz doesn't even look at
them anymore. He reads the summary at the start and approves it. I think Spencer could slip a line
about an orgy on the round table room and Cruz wouldn't catch it."
Prentiss laughed so hard that she nearly snorted and she was still laughing when Spencer came back to the table to collect Aaron. He shook his head at her and smiled back at the man at the bar.

"Prentiss, this is Albert. Albert works at MPD, and he's going to escort you home in case Dev's hanging around. If you want him to stay outside your building for the night as well, he can. It's up to you."

"Sure on the escort home but no on the keeping watch. I have good security since I moved and I trust it." Prentiss finished off her wine and set the glass down before she stood up. Albert held out his arm, and she looped hers in it. Albert tipped his head at Aaron and Spencer and then escorted Prentiss out.

"Good thinking."

"Dev's pissed enough to do something stupid, and while I don't care if he attacks us, I don't want him attacking Prentiss. Let's go home and cuddle whatever will let us."

Aaron really liked that idea, so he slid out of the booth to follow Spencer out and followed him all the way home.
Chapter 29

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Immortality, Humans, still seek it knowing that the only way to become Immortal is to become a God, which they have no chance of becoming through sheer will. The downside to that is thought that one is at the whims of the rest of the Humans to actually live forever. While worship is not needed for new Gods if Humans stop believing in whatever they are the God of, they will disappear. It would be like they never existed, even if they were Human before.

It's fascinating to see what Humans will do to become Immortal when all they really need to do is embody that which is something God-like. Do you think that the God of the Internet was just some stupid kid who played it all the time? No, he spent time becoming the master of it, and he was good at that. There have been others like him. There are Gods of sports. The first noticeable one was the God of Football, and then the others followed. Most of them I find too pretentious to even think about much less talk to, but the God of Hockey is a fun little asshole. He's one of my favorite people in the world. A goalie, if you want to know.

Immortality is not for the faint of heart, but then Humans don't get that, they cling to life instead of living it and crave something that will never happen. Their life is short, and they just have one shot at it before they have to start over. They should make the most of what they have but they cling to whatever they want, and it ruins them.

December 2012

"How many other ways have people tried to become Immortal, that you've been told about by other Gods?" Morgan asked as he settled into the seat across from Spencer on the jet. Aaron was sitting with Dave, and they were discussing a lot of mundane things that had to do with rumors that Dave heard that was being bandied around the locker room of sorts on the base.

"That I've heard directly from other Gods at the clubs and such?" Spencer clarified.

"Yes," Morgan nodded his head.

JJ and Prentiss got up from where they were on the other side of Aaron and Dave and moved over to motion for the males to move so they could sit as well. Spencer stood up and allowed Prentiss to slip in between him and the outer side of the jet while Morgan scooted over so that JJ could sit across from Spencer. Dave turned in his seat so that he could look in the direction of the other four. Aaron was intrigued as well.

The lengths that their UnSub had gone to for his shot at immortality and what he had made himself believe about reincarnation, Aaron was very intrigued by what Spencer had seen Humans do over the years. He knew that it would be the stories of what he had experienced instead of just hearing, but no one else needed to know that.

"There are the horribly disgusting things that make this job needed. I've seen fathers who know they are dying infusing their child in various ways with what was then called the seed of life, today called sperm for the science-minded. You can infer the methods as I am sure that each of you has a different in your head and each of one of them would be correct. I heard of one such man who was slowly wasting away and trying to inject his life into his young son. A God, and no I won't tell you which one, gladly beheaded him in the middle of the village with the blood of his son on him. The village
cheered me on, and one of the ladies who had lost her child in a raid by another village as well as her husband took the boy in as the mother was not fit to raise him and blamed him for the father lying with him instead of her."

"Wow, that's..." Morgan said. He looked a little green around the gills and Aaron could agree with that one. He felt a little sick at that one.

"Then there is the basis of our man with the maggots. I've heard that one a few times from Old Gods. There is the transferring of blood while dying to an infant. There are the few who try and get it right but end up killing the child by trying to get their blood or semen into a pregnant woman. Not all of the rapes killed the child, but if the blood transfer was happening, usually, it did. There was no safe way to do that kind of stuff before modern medicine. Humans are horrible in many ways, and it was part of why I was pulled to this job while I learned about psychology. We might chase the worst of the worst, but we do good when we stop the UnSub. Even if we can't save every single victim, we stop the UnSub from taking more. That's enough, even if sometimes it doesn't feel like it's enough."

"Some time I want to sit down with Mimir and pick his brain about how Humans have not changed, only we've gotten better at being evil," Morgan said.

"I think that Mimir would eviscerate you, Morgan," Prentiss said with a grin on her face, Aaron could just see her face and saw when she winked at Aaron.

"Well, his books are interesting enough that I read them when they come out. Though I've just got caught up on them. Reid talked me into reading them. It's helped me come to terms with what happened to me when I was younger and the Gods being around but not doing anything about him or any of the people who do what he did. It was a lot of reading before I understood why Reid wanted me to read them. The cacophony of voices that the Old Gods have to hear would make it hard to pick one and help them."

"So what is everyone's plans for the holiday?" JJ asked.

"I'm going skiing," Morgan said.

"Alone?" Dave asked, which made everyone laugh a little.

"Maybe, maybe not." Morgan was grinning as he said it.

"This is Jack's first year where he doesn't believe in Santa anymore," Aaron said. He felt a little sad at that but not so much that he wasn't going to enjoy the holiday.

"I'm shocked he last this long with Reid with him," Dave said.

"Well, I do believe in Santa but not the Santa that kids believe in. Santa was never a single person, he was never a man who flew around the world dropping off presents. Santa is a piece in every single Human who does small things for friends, family, and even strangers. Santa is an idea more than he is a person."

"Here I thought Reid was going to tell us that Santa is a God or a lot of Gods who take care of their own areas." Prentiss laughed at her own joke, but it fell flat after a few seconds. Aaron couldn't see Spencer, so he wasn't sure what look was on his face that was making Prentiss stop laughing.

"Who knows what kind of beings calling themselves have popped up. I can't know everything in the world, that's Mimir's job." Spencer did a shrug, and the tilt of his head said that he was smiling. Aaron knew the tilt well.
The talk wandered back to what everyone was doing, and Aaron just listened as the jet neared DC. They were almost home, and Aaron was so thrilled to be heading home. There was just enough time left in the workday that they could get all of the work with the case done and then enjoy two weeks off for a holiday. It was their standard rotation for a week off of cases to catch up things, but the whole team had spent their extra time the last few weeks to clear their desks. No one had anything outstanding, Dave had stepped up to help Aaron clear his work with the extra work from the rest of the team. Then outside of extreme cases, the whole of the BAU had the week of Christmas off, and there was a hierarchy of when each team was going to be called in, it changed each year with the top team dropping to the bottom. It had worked well since it had been implemented. There were teams that were upset when the team before didn't get called out, but they did the next year, but all was fair as there had been a year where a team had got called out twice, just as they had finished their first case and missed Christmas altogether. Aaron really hoped that no one got called out at Christmas but the way that he looked at it, it was a good to help than to have something worse happen at this time of year.

Aaron only pulled his mind from his musings when he felt the jet land. He had put on his seat belt on rote when the chime had sounded it seemed as Aaron didn't remember doing it at all. Aaron frowned as he saw that Spencer was up and moving around before it was time, but he stopped when he saw that Spencer was chasing something. JJ screamed, and Aaron was up to rush over to help. Spencer beat Aaron there and reached down below the table and came up with something that looked like a rainbow feather duster.

The thing made a hissing sound and jumped up into the air, the feathers spreading out and Aaron saw the snake-like body on it. It looked like a feathered snake.

"I wondered what that was that I felt," Spencer said. He sat down in his chair again. JJ was moving as close to him as she could get.

"What is that?" Aaron asked.

"This is one of the mythical creatures created by man that propagates on its own without needing to be created. It's a Quetzalcoatl. This one is about two months I old I would assume. It's been separated from its herd."

"Herd?" Morgan asked. The Quetzalcoatl turned to him and hissed again, but it didn't seem to be that upset, just making its presence known.

"Yes. There was a ring of traffickers in creatures that was broken up near where we were, and they assumed that a few of the creatures had got away. The traffickers didn't do well at keeping a good list of all of them. So who did you attach yourself to little one?" Spencer held out his arm, and the Quetzalcoatl settled onto his arm, claws digging in enough to draw a little blood. "You are very beautiful, lovely bright colors. I can see why you were taken. Were you taken from your herd or was your herd taken as a whole?"

"Why are they called herds?"

"It's technically a word that started out to mean any grouping of animal, and it was later adapted to other terms. Like for crows and various other animals. Any mythical creature uses the term herd, even if their normal animal equivalent uses a different term."

The Quetzalcoatl wandered up Spencer's arm before jumping onto the back of his seat. It leaned toward Aaron and hissed at him. The hiss did not sound like a good one, so Aaron didn't move toward him. Aaron watched as it focused on Dave next. It made the same hissing noise before turning away from him. JJ and Prentiss were treated to the same hissing noise, and then the
Quetzalcoatl was focusing on Morgan.

"Well, Morgan it looks like you now have a new pet. You think that your girlfriend that you've been trying to keep from us will like him?" Spencer said.

"I have no clue. She's got a dog, and that should be interesting. I've not had a pet since Clooney passed. What do I feed it?"

"It will decide what it wants, including your cheeseburger. It can eat anything. It uses its innate magic to make everything into something to feed its body. I am unsure of the sex, but that usually doesn't present until it's about a year old. If it finds a mate, you'll have a pair. They mate for life which is several hundred years old, but when you pass they will go into the wild to live and start their own herd, so they are not like parrots or tortoise that have to be left in wills. I'm sure there is a book that I can find for you on them."

"Why wouldn't it go to the other person who has the mate?"

"It won't mate with someone who is owned in a sense by someone else. They create a bond with you and that breaking will kill them so they would never, for lack of a better term, fall in love with someone who has one unless you two are also mated."

"You know I blame you for this," Morgan said.

"Meaning that if I were not on the team, it wouldn't have found us? Wrong. It still would have found, and it would have snuck into your bag and then snuck out again, but none of you would have reacted well at all and probably would have scared it enough to where it defended itself, which could have crashed the jet. It's very powerful and would have done whatever it needed to do to make sure that it made off her alive, even if that meant all of you didn't."

The seat belt light came off, and Aaron heard the jet cycling through the checks that it went through when it had landed.

"Let's get off this flying metal tin can," Dave said.

The whole of the team agreed on that. Morgan was the first off with his new pet Quetzalcoatl on his shoulder. Aaron watched as it rubbed on Morgan's neck like it was petting itself. Aaron was just thankful that it didn't want either of them. Their place was already a zoo with Stormy, Peaches, and Ri as well as the others who came to visit from the roof.

Aaron heard something, and he rolled over. Spencer was asleep beside him, the pills that they had both taken to help them rest had obviously actually knocked them both out. He looked at the clock to see that it was just after midnight which made it Christmas Eve. Aaron rolled back to wrap himself around Spencer and closed his eyes. Sleeping felt weird, and Aaron felt groggy in a way that he never had when he was woken up after only an hour of sleep when he was human.

There was something wrong in the house, and Aaron knew it, but he couldn't figure it out. There was something that was stopping him from slipping back into sleep even though his body wanted to with the effects of the drugs on him. There was a screech, and before Aaron could figure out what it was, Spencer was up and out of bed. Aaron got up to follow him and stopped when he realized that he was still naked and so wasn't Spencer. Aaron grabbed a pair of pants and slipped them on then grabbed a pair for Spencer. He was one step out of the bedroom when he heard Spencer's voice from the direction of Jack's room.

"What the hell do you think you are doing?" Spencer demanded to someone.
Aaron turned to the right and walked quickly to where Jack's bedroom door was. Jack's night light was on, andAaron knew that he had turned it off, but Jack could turn it on with a quick touch of his hand. Aaron looked to see someone standing with Jack in their arms. Jack was awake and silent, but he looked scared. Aaron swallowed. The woman was just standing there, and it took Aaron a few seconds to place who she was. She was vastly changed by her years in prison.

"Haley," Aaron said. Aaron's hand itched to have a gun in it. He looked around the room to see that Stormy and Ri were waiting for a moment to do anything. Aaron wasn't even sure Haley could see them or not.

"Ri, go and call the cops," Spencer whispered.

"Who the fuck are you talking to, faggot?" Haley demanded. She looked from Spencer to Aaron finally, and Aaron could only see the insanity in her eyes. Aaron wasn't sure how she had got out of the hospital prison that she was in and claimed to be sane. It was almost like Aaron could smell the insanity on her.

"That's none of your business," Spencer said.

Ri took off, and Aaron hoped that Stormy did not attack. Haley did not have a good hold on Jack, and she could hurt him easily on accident if she were frustrated.

"Why are you here?" Aaron asked.

"I came to get the address for this God whose fucking my husband it seems. Jessica had your address in her address book, and it was easy for Daddy to get it when he came over for a visit under the guise of making good with her again. Jessica misses Daddy, but it wasn't hard for Daddy to get her pissed enough to where she had to go to the kitchen to cool off, and that's when he got the address for you. I hoped to sneak in and get the faggot's address, but then when I got inside after picking the lock, you learn a lot of things in jail, evening the cushy ones like the one I was in. So I go to your office Aaron, and I see that there is evidence that you are not living alone. I came up to see what woman you got to fill your bed while I was in jail for defending my marriage and lo and behold there you are in bed with the fucking faggot that broke up our marriage. I had planned to kill him to avenge the fact that he had broke us up, but I changed plans. I was still going to kill him, but first I was going to get Jack out of here and safe from the faggot. Then I planned to come back and kill him, and with Jack gone, they would think that you killed him and kidnapped your own child. Two birds with one stone. I'm going to leave with my son and you are going to allow it, or I'll snap his neck."

Jack looked even more scared, but he didn't try and get away from Haley. He wasn't fighting back at all and Aaron wondered about that. He tried to figure out if Jack was drugged or not.

"You aren't getting out of this one, Haley. You just admitted to coming in here with ill intent and didn't pay attention that you were being recorded. There is no escaping anything this time. You were given five years for threatening to kill me in public court, and then you came in here with the intent to find my address and kill me. Then kidnapping and framing Aaron for murder and kidnapping, well you might just get life in prison for that."

"I'll make the judge understand that I am just defending my marriage."

"What marriage?" Aaron asked. He felt disgusted, and he thought that he could never feel that again when it came to Haley. He thought that she had made him feel everything that he ever could for her. "The marriage that ended when you killed only the Gods know how many kids that we had created before they could even be born? The marriage that ended when I entered a hotel room to hear you begging another man to fuck you? I divorced you with prejudice, and all you are is someone who"
can't understand that something is over. I wouldn't fuck you with another man's cut off penis much less my own ever again."

Haley screamed, dropping Jack and lunging at Aaron. Aaron stepped aside to catch her as she dropped Jack. Spencer dove downward caught him, rolling to the side where Stormy landed and made herself as big as she could, wings flared. Aaron grabbed Haley's outstretched hand and spun her to where he could get a hold of both of her hands and hold them behind her back. Aaron did not have a pair of cuffs with him at the house, those were all in go bags or his desk at work. Aaron looked at Spencer once he was sure that Haley was held tight in his hands. Spencer had Jack turned around in his arms with Jack's face pressed into his neck.

"Hello?" a strange voice called out from at the bottom of the stairs.

"Up here!" Aaron yelled back. If that was the cops, it had not taken them long at all to get there. Aaron turned him and Haley around to where he could see who was coming in the door. It was indeed a cop. "That didn't take long."

"We were already en-route when your nanny called the cops. Someone had seen someone sneaking around, and when they gave the description to dispatch, it matched her face who as understand it has a restraining order for three hundred feet of this building as well as the New Haven school. So we booked it over. My partner is downstairs talking to the nanny. He's trained to talk to Pixies. Seems that he's seen them is whole life. Officer Bobbins at your service Agents Hotchner and Reid. I am correct in assuming that this woman is Haley Brooks?"

"HOTCHNER!" Haley yelled and tried to lunge at the officer.

"Yes, this is Haley Brooks, my ex-wife. I don't have a pair of cuffs on my person. If you wouldn't mind letting me have yours?" It would make getting her cuffed easier as she could easily slip away if they tried to transfer his grip to Bobbins.

"Sure." Bobbins handed over the handcuffs and Aaron deftly put them on her. Haley lunged at the officer when Aaron let go of her arm to grab the short chain between the cuffs. The officer grabbed her and spun her around before shoving at her knee to make her drop to her knees. "Did she break in?"

"I have audio recording," Spencer said as he stood up with Jack in his arms. He looked at Aaron. "Jack's been having nightly visitors a few Pixies from around the neighborhood, and we record everything to make sure that nothing else comes to visit him. The device can pick up a whisper, and it's as clear as if you were actually talking to them. As soon as I get Jack settled down enough to where I can let him go, I'll get that audio. The equipment that is being used is military grade."

"That sounds good, Agent..." Bobbins gave Spencer a shy smile.

"Reid, thank you for taking the care in this that was needed."

"I don't care who and I don't care what. A restraining order is a restraining order, and anyone in violation of it needs to be taken care of."

"Help!" another voice called out from the first floor. Aaron exited Jack's room and turned right before rushing to the stairs. The first thing that Aaron saw halfway down was that Peaches was around and he was poking the officer standing there in the chest, bitching at him in what Aaron assumed was the Pixie language. Aaron wanted to laugh, but he didn't. He would save that for when Haley was not in the house.
"Peaches!" Aaron barked.

Peaches turned and looked at Aaron a few seconds before flying over to him and landing on Aaron's shoulder, cuddling into Aaron's neck. Aaron felt something wet and cold on Peaches, so he reached up and plucked the creature from his shoulder.

"That Brooks woman seems to have hit him over the head," the officer said. He stepped up with a handkerchief in his hand and offered it to Peaches. Peaches took it, blushing a little as he did, he gently started to clean up the blood as best as he could before pressing it to his head. "At least that's what I could understand before it started to speak so fast I couldn't understand a single word that he was saying."

"I demand to know what she doing here, and she tossed me into a wall. That woke up Ri, I heard that before I passed out," Peaches said.

"You did well. She didn't hurt Jack."

"Who be she?" Peaches asked.

"Someone bad," Jack said.

Aaron saw that Spencer was standing in the middle of the stairs. Jack had asked a few times about his mother, but after Spencer had explained that she had done something really mean to Aaron and that had hurt Aaron a lot and that when Jack was older, he would have it all explained, Jack hadn't asked again.

"Jack baby," Haley said from the other side of the room. Aaron looked to see that Bobbins was escorting Haley down on that side with Stormy behind, keeping a close watch. Ri flew from somewhere and landed on Jack's shoulder, rubbing her face on his cheek. Jack wiggled, and Spencer let him down. Jack sat down on the stairs and looked at where Haley was. Stormy jumped up onto the railing on her stairs and jumped/flew to Jack's stairs. She stayed right there. Aaron looked at her with a smile on his face.

"Aaron, you are going to let them take me?" Haley demanded to know as she was dragged to the door by Bobbins. She tried to fight out of the officer's hold, but he kept a firm hold on her. Haley was gone in seconds. Aaron walked over to where he could look outside. He watched as a second cop car pulled up this time with its light on. Bobbins pushed Haley into the back of it and then shut the door before coming back up into the building. There was a long wait for him to get back up into the house part of the building. When he appeared, he had three boxes of food in his hand. He walked those right over to Spencer and handed them over.

"Oh, thanks."

"The woman who gave me this said that you were to eat all of it and only let the thief steal a little bit, Agent Reid," Bobbins stepped back, and he laughed a little. "This is my partner Deacon."

"I'll take care of the audio. I have a flash drive that I can transfer it to. It will have the recording of the entire house during the time. It will get her braking in and creeping around. If she said anything. The main hub for the system is the office, which she said she had entered. We have friends we can go and stay with if this place needs to be swept for prints." Spencer settled in at the island, setting the food out in front of him with a pair of chopsticks that were always in the middle of the island. He started to practically inhale his food. Both of the officers just stared at him before Bobbins seemed to force himself to look away.
"Why don't we just have you stay here. I want to make sure that it's documented well where she was in this place. Do you want the FBI to take over?" Bobbin looked like he was a little in awe of how fast Spencer was eating. Aaron though had seen him eat faster.

"No, not at the moment. We are fine letting MPD handle this. It's a local matter and while we are agents this a civil matter as well as criminal. The restraining order is for the residence no matter who is there, so that means no matter if she thought that I wasn't home."

"Thank you."

"The BAU doesn't like to take cases away unless it's active and a danger. This one is over, but it will be a nice show of the fact that the FBI does trust the local police to handle matters. She's never going to get out of jail after this. Stepping back will help make it so that undue influence doesn't influence the judges."

"She's going to be in a lot of trouble if the audio is even half as damaging as her own rantings and raving. The other set of officers are getting her side of things. Hard through to cover for breaking in here though. Just walk us through your evening here," Bobbins said.

Aaron listened to Spencer go into the details after they had got home from shopping, even down to him only locking the door and the deadbolt and not setting the alarm. It was going to be a big point for a while with Aaron on setting that, especially if Haley was set out on bail, though Aaron hoped that she wasn't.

"You didn't see her?"

"No, if she was watching the place, I never saw her."

"I'm going to talk to the owners of the restaurant downstairs and see if they have seen her around when we are done here." Bobbin looked at Jack who was asleep curled into Stormy's body on the stairs. "If I didn't work all cases that have to do with creatures, made and not made then that would freak me out. I've never met a dragon but a little girl at the edge of the city made a unicorn, and when her father came into to her room to abuse her, the unicorn gutted him."

"There is a reason that some kids always feel better with things they make, sometimes it's not the monster under the bed that they fear. There are all kinds of monsters, and all that glitters isn't gold. Some of the best-looking people in the world are the worst shit possible." Spencer picked up a pile of noodles with his chopsticks and stuffed them into his mouth. He was now basically stress eating and not eating because he was hungry. Aaron was glad that his body turned calories into other things than fat because he would be huge after this if it weren't the truth.

"Aaron?" Jessica called out as she stepped in the door. The two officers were up and looking at her, hands over guns. "Please tell me that she didn't hurt him?"

"Emotionally and mentally that remains to be seen by physically, he's fine," Spencer stabbed his chopsticks down into the pile of noodles which were all that was left of the three trays of food. Aaron hadn't even seen what was in the middle one. Spencer jerked his head toward the stairs, and Jessica slumped in relief at the sight of him there. "I think though that it might be best if we make sure that Aaron and I are around right now if you are around. He was asleep when she tried to take him. You two look enough alike, and her hair is blond like yours at the moment."

Aaron hadn't even thought about that, but Spencer's words made a lot of sense.

"No, I understand. My father called, and as soon as I realized what he was saying, I recorded him
with that device you gave me. I was given a line tapping device on loan from the FBI in case my
sister called me. I recorded it, and I brought the file." Jessica held it out to Aaron, but Aaron waved it
toward Bobbins. Bobbins took it. "He knew that she was coming here to kill Spencer. He reveled in
it. He thinks that I'm in love with Aaron and lured Spencer with my female wiles to break up the
marriage so I could have Aaron. I will admit to being jealous of Haley when I was younger but not
because she had Aaron but because Aaron was so in love with her. I wanted someone to love me
like that. Aaron would have done anything for her before she started to change, or she started to
show who she was."

"With that recording, you know that your father is going to go to jail, right?" Aaron said.

Bobbins looked a little upset at what he was holding.

"He didn't care about anything but having his daughter back, his real daughter and helping her raise
Jack to hate everything. I can't stand by that. Jack's happy here. He's a bright little boy who loves
both of the men who are raising him, and I'm just glad that despite my family and what they are
doing they allow me to be a part of his life."

"You are a true jewel ma'am." Bobbins nodded his head at her and gave her a smile.

"Thank you. I'm just sick."

"Auntie?" Jack called out. He sat up on the stairs and looked at her. When he rubbed at his eye and
looked again, his face broke in a frown, and he took off running at her. He was crying by the time
that he was in her arms. "I thought it was you and then she jerked me out of bed and she was so
mean. I don't want her. I want you and I want Daddy and Pen."

Jessica picked up Jack and let him wrap his legs and arms around her.

"Ma'am if you want to take him upstairs, he can be brought in tomorrow to give his statement on
what happened once he's calmed down. I think that right now some peace and quiet with his pet and
you is what is needed."

"The guest room is made up if you want to take Jack in there," Spencer said.

Aaron knew that it was going to be a long night, but everything was okay. Jack might have a few
nightmares, but Aaron would make sure that he had everything that he needed to make a recovery
from this. Aaron looked at Spencer who was looking at Jessica as she carried Jack up the stairs and
out of their sight. Aaron wasn't sure if Spencer would let him ask for leniency on Roy Brooks, but
the man didn't need to spend the rest of his life in a maximum security prison. Something in a
minimum one would satisfy Aaron. Haley though, he wanted the book thrown at her, and if she
never saw the light of day again, it would be too soon.
Chapter 30

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Family has the knife that wounds and the salve that heals. It's the perfect dichotomy, but still, we crave family. Yes, I said we. Gods were created by humans, it's no wonder that we crave the closeness that Humans look their whole life for. We are not immune to a lot of Human mental condition. Humans can only create in their realm of what they think and what they believe. They wanted us to power powerful and to fix everything that is wrong with them, but they forgot that we would be selfish just like them. They should not have made us in their image if they wanted someone who would actually give a fuck about them at all.

Where was I? Oh yes, family. Brothers to be specific. There is nothing as good as family drama when it's between two brother, or two siblings in general when those brothers are fighting over the shit that their parents did to them. Normally, I would move on and not watch but this time...well this time I have a stake in the fight between the brothers and really if the second, younger one pisses me off enough, I'll just kill him. I'll be forgiven at some point for it. I know I will.

May 2013

"Who are you here for?" the man behind the glass asked. He wasn't even looking up.

"Sean Hotchner, we are his lawyers," Aaron said. He knew that technically that was a lie, but Aaron would talk to him and figure out exactly what Sean had got himself into this time that made him be arrested for murder and then he would help him. Filling out the visitation form for the central lockup in New York was not nearly as full with visitors as Aaron thought it would be. He looked back at Spencer who had his messenger bag over his shoulder, already emptied of everything that would not be allowed. It just held the case files as Aaron had them in the case that was being built against Sean. Sean had called him desperate after he had been arrested.

After calling Jessica to come and watch Jack since Sheila was still working on her Ph.D. dissertation and Aaron didn't want to bother her. Even if she was still going to be going to school, Sheila was already looking around for a replacement for her in the incoming Freshman class. Sheila was going to be going to medical school, and with the money she had put away from working for Aaron as an on-call babysitter all the time, she wouldn't have to work during medical school. She was also starting a little later because she wanted her Ph.D. to be done before she entered medical school. Spencer had made sure that she had everything that she needed, also knowing that all she had to do was ask and they would help her with anything that they needed. She had already carved out a weekend during the month that she would come over and spend with Jack. Jack was very upset about it all, but he understood why Sheila was leaving and why she couldn't be his babysitter anymore.

"He'll be brought in to you in a few," another guard said as he opened the door to one of the visitation rooms that were used by lawyers.

"You don't talk about Sean much at all," Spencer said as he settled into the seat that was furthest away from the door.

"I don't like to think about him much. He's resented me for a long time."

"Despite the fact that his life was fucking easy because your parents actually loved him and didn't
habitually abuse him?" Spencer asked.

Aaron looked at him and debated if he should leave or not. Aaron had told Spencer a lot about his family life growing up, how Sean was the wanted child, the boy who would be THE Hotchner son that could be showed off to society and how when he had entered school, Aaron was shipped off to boarding school. Aaron hadn't minded that at all. He could then sleep the night through without worrying about his father entering the room and beating the hell out of him because he was drunk and bored.

"Spencer, please," Aaron said.

"Oh, no. You wanted me here, and you've got me. If he starts any of his normal shit that he had such a hard life living up to the standards that you put forth when all you were doing was trying to please your damned parents when they couldn't be arsed to actually give a fuck about anything but crushing and abusing then he's going to get a rude awakening."

"Just let me do the talking at first."

"I make no promises." Spencer pulled out the files that Aaron had been given. He had not read them yet as Aaron had been reading them while he talked to a few people that he knew in New York to try and understand what was happening. The entire train ride up to New York had been Spencer on the phone speaking languages that Aaron recognized but didn't know. Aaron only knew French and enough Spanish to talk to witnesses and victims.

Aaron stood up when the door opened, he looked at Sean who looked a little worse for the wear but was at least still in his own clothes and not a jumper that was for inmates. Spencer didn't even look up from the files that he was looking at. He filled a page, and Aaron realized that he was reading at a normal Human pace and giving Aaron until he was done with the papers to figure out what he wanted to do.

"Aaron, you came." Sean sounded shocked. He was in cuffs, and Aaron hated seeing that but Sean had made his choices in life, and this was just one of them.

"Of course I came. You called and asked me to come."

"Who is this?" Sean sat down across from them, and the guard didn't chain him to the table, Aaron was thankful for that.

"Been a while since we've seen you, Doc," the guard said.

"Eh, been busy back home. Thanks, Reginald." Spencer looked up from the papers he was reading and gave the guard a smile.

"Let me know if you want coffee."

"Coffee would be awesome. Three cups for us. A little sugar in Agent Hotchner's and..." Spencer trailed off as he looked, Sean. He cocked his head to the side and then grinned. "Three tablespoons of powdered, no sugar creamer in Mister Hotchner's."

Reginald nodded his head and left the room.

"Doc, I heard a few of the guards talking about you. Said that you had taken my case. Who is this Aaron?"

"That's a damned good question." Aaron tried to remember the name that Spencer had signed in
under, and he hadn't looked at all.

"The guards call me Doc because when I first met them that's all I got out was I was Doctor before an inmate threw a chair at me and it took me down. The New York criminal courts know me as Doctor Spencer Reid, and when I've been bored before on vacations and other things, I work cases for those who can't afford a lawyer to get them off, but a court-appointed would just get them thrown in jail. Now, this does not mean that I'll take your case, Sean. You are probably going to see a little bit of jail time for your theft of supplies from your employer and selling alcohol without a license even if it was not to a private citizen I think that I could get you off on the murder charge."

Sean looked at Aaron, Aaron saw that out of the corner of his eye. Aaron though was looking at Spencer. It was another facet of Spencer that even after over nine years of knowing him he had never known about him. "Aaron, who is this?"

"I gave you my name, Mister Hotchner. That's all you need to know really but given I know exactly how stubborn the Hotchner men are, you both have nothing by the way on Jack who thinks he needs candy after being a good boy all day long. I am the God on the BAU team that your brother runs, but I am also your brother's lover."

Sean sat back in his chair as the door opened and Reginald walked back into the room. There was a large paper cup in one hand, and it was set down in front of Sean while Aaron and Spencer got regular mugs as well as a carafe that another guard carried in behind him.

"The carafe is made to Agent Hotchner's standards and-" Reginald stopped talking as he set down a few of the single serve cups of liquid creamer. "This your favorite?"

"Yes. Thank you, Reginald." Spencer barely looked at him as he was looking at the papers. He picked up his cup of coffee and took a sip as the two guards left the room.

"So you were acting weird when you were picked up for the death of that girl Anna. Tell us everything that happened and remember this Sean, I will know if you are lying."

"Look I had a tab that needed an override card. So I had to go and get Thane to get the card that he had for that. Anna was in the stall with him. She started to talk about how she was hot and thirsty. She died in my arms. Thane was freaking out, and so we carried her outside, to hopefully not draw attention to the club. By the time we got her outside, she was dead. I called the cops, told them what Thane told me to tell them which was that she complained of being hot, so we helped her outside to cool down and then she died. I don't know what happened next but then all of a sudden the cops are asking me about a case of wine that was tainted with something, and I was accused of tainting it and selling it. I just needed a little bit of money, and we stock so much of that wine that no one was going to miss it. I didn't know it was tainted. It seems that Thane decided to cut me loose and pin all of it on me. It would look better for the club."

"We have a married couple and a young kid dead by tainted wine. PMMA," Spencer said as he looked at Aaron.

"What?"

"There is a case that crossed my desk by my liaison that is about drugging with PMMA. I had told Spencer a little about it but not a lot. I didn't realize that it was the same as yours until we were on our way up already. So they want to pin it all on you. The cops that is, while the real UnSub is out there killing people."

"I didn't kill Jim Peters."
"No, whoever did that had a vendetta against him, and everyone else is collateral damage, and he thinks that he's safe."

"He's got a taste for killing," Spencer said. He handed the files over to Aaron, and there was one on top that Aaron looked at. "We need the team here."

"Yes. I'll make sure that Cruz comes in as well."

"We don't need you being accused of trying to get your brother off. Well, Sean now it's time to get to know my lover's family. Aaron is going to leave, and you are going to tell me everything about your life here in New York, including your use of drugs."

"How the hell did you know that?" Sean picked up his cup of coffee and took a drink of it, frowning as he did. Aaron knew it wasn't from the coffee.

"I know a lot of things, and I know the signs of an addict who is on the mend. There is also a Linda mentioned in these files which it seems died as one of the first and it's why you are being accused of this. She was a recovering addict, and while her boyfriend's name isn't mentioned, there is enough that I connected that to you. She was getting you sober and helping you stay that way."

Aaron got up from the table and made sure to take his phone. The door was unlocked, so he let himself out. Aaron would have to ask about what he really did on his weekend trips to New York because having fun was something that obviously did not mean the same thing to Spencer as it did to Aaron. He was working cases for those who needed someone with a good degree.

It was almost an hour before Aaron entered the room again, this time laden with food for all three of them. Aaron had just a single container of food for himself as well as what used to be Sean's favorite Chinese food, a container of egg rolls, and three other things for Spencer. Aaron hoped that Sean liked at least one of the things because Spencer wasn't that picky and Aaron made sure that what he had Spencer would eat if Sean didn't like his anymore.

Sean was writing in a notepad, his handcuffs off, a pencil that needed sharpening in his hand. Aaron saw that several pages were flipped over and Sean wasn't exactly writing the biggest.

"He's writing out everything that he has seen while working at Edinburgh. If they are going to throw the book at him, I'm going to make sure that they throw the book at every other employee."

"A modified scorched-earth defense," Aaron said as he sat down. He gave Spencer a smile and nodded his head that he liked it. "Do you still like Kung Pao Shrimp?" Aaron asked Sean as he started to hand out the food. There were only chopsticks in the bag, the guards hadn't even cared that he had them in the room. They had looked at the food, stole an egg roll each and then waved him on.

"Did you give Reginald and his partner an egg roll each?" Spencer asked as he opened the eggrolls and took out two, shoving one into his mouth with only a single bite to break it. His other hand was writing. Aaron had never seen him write with his left hand before, the writing was pretty damned good.

"They took one each when they were inspecting the food. Called it the cost of doing business."

"Pizza is on the way to them and the guards for dinner. There is a local place they love, but I always give them an egg roll each when they are on duty. I'm not shocked they strong-armed you out of it knowing that even if you fought back and didn't, I would have."

"Yes, I still like Kung Pao Shrimp," Sean said when he set down the pencil, Aaron figuring that he was at a stopping point in his narrative. "Oh, this smells wonderful. I've been too upset to eat, even if
the food here kind of sucks."

Sean scooted his food closer to him as Aaron set out Spencer's three containers. Sean's eyes widened to an almost comic size, and he frowned as Aaron only pulled out a single for him. Aaron still didn't eat as much in a single sitting as Spencer did, but he did eat more throughout the day, if he didn't, he just felt off. He understood why Spencer mentioned that he didn't need to eat; he just felt better when he did.

Spencer ate with his right hand and wrote down page after page of notes in a language that Aaron didn't know with his left. He wasn't even sure it was a language that anyone in the world knew as it looked like nothing that Aaron had ever seen. He might now know anything of most of the languages of the world but if they were big enough to be considered a statistic in the US he learned what the written language looked so he could call the correct person to translate it and not make a huge time gap trying to figure out the language.

"What language is that?" Aaron asked.

Spencer looked down at his notes like he didn't know what he was writing in and smiled, his chopsticks paused halfway to his face with a squid in it. Aaron had got Spencer all seafood while Sean obviously had Shrimp and Aaron's was just vegetables in garlic sauce, extra spicy. Aaron liked it a lot, and it was late enough that he still felt like he shouldn't eat anything too heavy. He had got noodles all around instead of rice. Aaron had not fully changed over like Spencer yet, even after three years, he still tried to eat a balanced meal, if for Jack's sake than anything else.

"Oh, it's just a God language I've picked up," Spencer said, and he blushed a little.

There was a knock at the door, and a man stepped in. He looked like he was fresh out of high school.

"Hello, I'm Hotchner's court-appointed attorney," the man said as he pushed his glasses up his nose with his finger. He was looking at Aaron with a little bit of fear on his face. "I'm like a few moments alone with my client, if you don't mind, Agent."

"Who are you exactly?" Spencer said as he stood up. He reached into his pocket and pulled out his credentials, and when he moved past Aaron, he grabbed his as well. "Did you listen to what the guards said?"

"Just that a prospective lawyer and an FBI agent was in here with him." The man was trying to act like he had a spine. Aaron kind of hated young lawyers who were not taught how to fight for their client in law school.

"Did the guards give a name of the FBI agent?" Spencer asked as he flipped first his credentials into the lawyer's face and then Aaron's.

"No..." the lawyer trailed off as Aaron assumed he read the second set. "You have an FBI agent for a family member?"

"Yes, he does and Aaron is here as his brother and not as an agent, not until the rest of our team gets here. I will, of course, not be helping with the case except as a consultant because I am going to take over Mister Hotchner's case. You are dismissed."

"You have no right to work a case here, Agent Reid."

"I hold my license to practice law in every single state in the United States, even Alaska, and Hawaii. So dismissed."
"Who the hell do you think you are?"

"When you were brought in on the court-appointed attorney list, did they talk about Doc?" Spencer asked. He handed Aaron his credentials back but didn't look at him.

"Yes. Told me not to piss him off."

"Guess what? You have. Get the fuck out of here. If you are not going to listen to everything that the Guards tell you, then you have no right to defend anyone."

The lawyer's face went white, and he turned tail and ran. The door stayed open, and about a minute later, Aaron heard the guards laughing.

"At least shit like that doesn't put me off food, or I'd ruin him." Spencer sat down and looked at his food before opening up the spicy shrimp that was in the second. He plucked up his chopsticks and started in on it, humming at the flavors.

"He's the kind of person I would love to cook for." Sean was looking at Spencer like Spencer was a thing to be studied, but Aaron at least knew that Sean was thinking from a recipe study not take him apart and study him that way.

"Speaking of. Once you are out of jail, I will have a job for you," Spencer said as he pointed at Sean with the chopsticks, a bundle of noodles wrapped around the tip. He ducked his head down to get them all in his mouth as using them as a pointer had allowed a few to escape.

"What?" Aaron and Sean asked.

"I own a restaurant up here, and when you are out of jail, you'll have an apartment to live above the restaurant, rent and utilities will come directly out of your paycheck, and you will have a job there. It will be dishwashing Wednesday through Sunday and then on Monday when the restaurant is closed to business you will help with food prep, and on Tuesday you will have the day off. The chef who runs the place will treat you like scum, but he treats everyone like scum until they prove that they deserve to work in his kitchen. At six months you will be evaluated as a cook and might be added to line cooking, and you might have to wait six months. I will guarantee that if you stick with it that at the end of three years you will have your place as a sous chef for one of the two seatings for the day if you actually show that you want to cook."

"You own a restaurant here?" Sean asked.

"New York has a soft spot in my heart, so I visit often. I think that we can get you out on parole pretty quickly on the charges that I won't be able to get you out of if it's shown that you have a stable job. I have run three convicts through this in the past thirty years."

Aaron opened his mouth to say something about he had just slipped up, but there was a twitch to Spencer's fingers that kept his mouth shut.

"You'd trust me like that?"

"You are a fuck up, but I think that this what you need to straighten out your life. Your brother's tough love has never worked, so it's best if we try my tough love."

Sean sat back, his chopsticks still in his hands, thankfully empty. He was frowning but seemed to be thinking. He nodded his head in agreeance.

"Good. You will also go to counseling while in prison. You will do everything to work through
whatever hang-ups you have with your brother. If you want me to, he can come up for a few sessions so you can work through your issues. He’ll do it to make me happy. Jack doesn't need you in his life, but he knows that he has an uncle that he's never met in his current memory. So if you fuck up, you'll not be really missed.”

"Jack's pretty big isn't he?" Sean asked.

"Yes, he is. I'll show you pictures later, but right now, we still need to focus on you."

"Soon once his statement is made, Aaron you'll have to leave," Spencer said.

"I know. I trust you with him. Sean, just do what he says. He's going to make sure that you are taken care of no matter what."

Aaron knew that things were looking bleak for Sean, but not everything with this was his own fault. He did his share of stupid to get him where he was, but the murder charges would never have been on there if someone hadn't tampered with the wine.

"So we have an invisible elephant in the room," Spencer said as he sat down on the arm of the couch in the jet. The team had flown up with Jack and Jessica so that Jack could meet Sean. Spencer had even made sure which prison Sean was going to, and they had family days that Aaron and Jack could go up and see him. Jack had an about an hour with Sean while Aaron and Sean said their goodbyes for now.

"An invisible elephant?" Morgan asked.

"Yes. When I met Gideon when I was at college, I never once said what was, and he assumed that I was a New God and never asked. I kept the lie going for a while, but after Rossi and Prentiss figured out who I am, I think it's best to tell everyone about the invisible elephant that is me being an Old God."

"Shit," Garcia said as she sat down beside Morgan at the table. She had two cups of drink in her hands. One she handed to Morgan. Morgan took a sip and winced a little. "Sorry, I made the tea really hot."

"It's fine." Morgan started to grin and held out his hands toward JJ who was across from him and Garcia. JJ pulled out her credentials and pulled a hundred dollar bill from it and handed it over. Garcia pulled one out of her bra. The real shock to Aaron was Prentiss coming over and handing Morgan some money as well. Aaron raised his eyebrow at her, and she shrugged.

"What's that?" Aaron asked.

"I went to Garcia to see if there was proof that Reid was an Old God after New York. He knew too much and reacted too different from normal. She couldn't find a thing. So I watched, and I learned. Then I watched a few other people that he was around. There were those that introduced themselves as Gods and those that introduced themselves as New Gods not many as Old Gods. He had more in common manner wise as the Gods and not the New Gods. I can understand why he kept his mouth shut, too. Look at what's going on with Hotch as the God of the FBI. I can see why hiding is the best option. So who are you?" Morgan asked.

"Why did you think I wasn't an Old God?" Spencer asked JJ.

"Back when we made a bet, Spence was still just...Spence to me. He was the man who you showed pictures of Jack falling asleep on his chest because he was warm when he was a baby. He was the
person who you chastised for doing physics magic in the bullpen but told him he was getting better at it. Yes, I knew that if he was an Old God he had been around for a while, but there are New Gods that have passed themselves off as old ones and vice versa. We knew all of that going in. While I didn't have to take profiling courses, I did, but I thought that I was better at it and thought that he wasn't acting too much different than any of the other New Gods we've been in contact with. He was just too damned earnest."

"I make a study of the human condition. I could probably pass for a drunken teenager if I were given the right makeup and clothes. I could also pass for a crotchety old man. It's all about managing perceptions. The way you see me and the way that I allow others to see me."

"So again, who are you?" JJ asked.

"No guesses?" Spencer asked.

"No. We ran through everything, and I did more research on Old Gods and New Gods than I had ever done before. I found out what makes the difference between the Old Gods and New Gods. That was an interesting ride. I found out that the Old Gods are the ones who laid that down. It's pretty good. They could have been assholes and put it down to a date, but the actual New Gods aren't held by worship in the way that the Old Ones are and it's only the ones who need that worship to survive that are considered Old Gods."

"Do you know who are the ones who settled that with the Governments of the World?" Spencer asked as he looked down at Aaron on the couch for a few seconds. Aaron moved over to make room for him. Dave grunted but allowed Aaron the room to allow Spencer to sit on his lap. There wasn't anything sexual to it, but it was nice to wrap his hand around Spencer's hip and hold him.

"According to what was released the Gods Apollo, Artemis, and Mimir. Though Mimir was only there through a phone call and the governments only had Apollo and Artemis's word that it was really him."

"You are good at what you do Garcia, I'm shocked that you never found me linked to anything through facial recognition."

"I got a lot of partial matches but nothing that I could confirm. Including a few missing person cases and some death cases. The pictures from a lot of them were grainy and horrible."

"And fingerprints are no good because we can change those."

"What?" Morgan asked.

"Oh, yes. Old Gods, we have a lot of control our bodies and what we look like. It's why I was able to turn into a teenage boy and grow up as Spencer Reid. It's why I age a little bit even now. I hate looking less than thirty. So I'll keep on aging until I reach what I like as my age. As to fingerprints, we can change those, but there is a small defect in all of them. No matter the print an Old God can figure out those who have changed them to escape a crime. It's not enough to get it brought into court, but we take care of our own. I have a small star at the tip of my whirl. There is a God in all major areas of the world that help maintain whatever system that area uses for fingerprint databases. The FBI knows this. Interpol knows that as well but only those that need to know. There is no reason to freak out the regular people. While we Gods were made by Humans and we have their defaults, it's rare for one to turn out like Doyle. In New Gods, it's more common, but then they are more flawed than us." Spencer looked down at Aaron. He reached out and cupped the side of Aaron's face and turned it to where they could rub noses. "Well, some New Gods that is."
"That's...kind of freaky, so you can change yourself to look like anyone?"

"No. We have a base structure to our bones just like you. I had enough features in common with Spencer that I was able to fake the rest with extra fat in certain places. It was easy to have that change though, the crushing death of his mother in a car accident, the loss of what little baby fat that Spencer had left was easy."

"So I read the report on that accident when you joined the team," Morgan said.

"I would expect no less." Spencer did not seem shocked at all and really neither did Aaron, not at all. He wasn't shocked if Morgan and called and talked to people about it either.

"It was a hit, just like the people that tried to take out Hotch. Given that you've been in a sexual relationship with Hotch you don't hate New Gods."

"Hell no. I don't hate many people. I don't look at New Gods like they are stealing our worship. Humans evolve and so don't their Gods. There are enough people in the world who worship some weird assed shit. Have Gods died because of a lack of worship? Yes. Do I care? No. Gods like Artemis and Apollo were able to transform to focus on certain aspects. Apollo loves medicine, he sucks up that worship of things like that. Artemis? There are those who live and breath hunting. They are out in the cold as hell mornings. When they wish for a deer, she soaks that up."

"And what do you soak up?" JJ asked.

"On paper, I can read at twenty thousand words per minute, but it's more than that and nearly unquantifiable. I can retain everything that I read, again that's as close as humans can get to understanding my brain."

"To AH and his son Jack, for showing me what I had been missing in my long life since I had lost the greatest thing I ever had," Morgan said. He looked scared, and Aaron could understand that feeling. Morgan looked at Aaron.

"I found out the night that he shot Foyet. Foyet figured out that he was an Old God by the way by watching him. I never got that out of him before he made a move that Spencer couldn't not react to. I was freaked out, and thankfully it was a good thing that I had the cover of a man invading m apartment to kill me to help sell the freaking out to everyone around me because my mind was blown on the fact that I was regularly fucking Mimir."

"You now live with the God Mimir," Spencer said. He gave Aaron a smile before looking at each member of the team. "I guard who I am with a tight leash. I know Gods who can take that memory from you. I don't want to, but it's never to be uttered anywhere. I told Prentiss to help her recover by what Doyle had done. Rossi figured out enough on his own to be damaging if I didn't tell him. I don't want it ever coming out who I am. I'll stick as Spencer Reid New God of Psychology until I get bored with it and then we shall see what I do. Aaron's kind of tied to the FBI now but that doesn't mean he will always be where he is. I could easily fade into the background and come back as Mimir in a different way. The only person who needs to know within the FBI knows and he's okay keeping it quiet. There is nothing more that I can do as Mimir that I can't do as Spencer Reid, New God who loves to read anything and everything he can get his hands on."

"How do you read?"

"I actually don't. If the word is written down, I know it. I can't always find it, and it's easier to read the book if I have to, but I can find a thread to it and then go from there. The damned killer who wrote his journals and slipped up. I had those in my head, but with fiction books on murder and other
crimes, and even fanfiction, there is no way to know who's writing a fiction story from the point of view of a killer and who is writing about what they have actually done to a person. I can lay my hand on a book and know what's in it. If the word has been uttered, I can probably recall it. Words written in any way shape or form is better, but spoken words can be remembered by me even if I don't hear them. I know every single language that has ever been spoken on this planet. I walk a fine line on cases on getting us where we need to be and making sure that it holds up in court and just fucking going after the UnSub myself."

"I don't envy you at all. I have a lot more questions, but we all are tired and worn out."

"Breakfast at our house tomorrow. You can all come over, and I'll cook, and we can talk and drink. Anyone gets drunk I'm sure we can find a place for you to sleep if you need a nap like a little kid."

"Ha, ha Reid," Morgan said with a grin on his face. He looked down at the money in front of him and handed over half of it to Spencer. Spencer took it, but he had a weird look on his face. "For food. I'm bringing my girlfriend. We can make it a family event after she goes to her shift after eating. I want you all to meet her. Savannah is lovely, and she's an ER doctor."

"Well, then that's a plan. Family meal and I'll gladly tell Will who I am. Henry will enjoy a day with me. Probably won't leave my lap unless he's playing with Jack. He loves that playroom."

"Yes, he does," JJ deadpanned.

The team started to laugh, and Aaron relaxed back into the couch. He had told Spencer he didn't care if the whole of the team ever knew who he was, but Aaron could understand that Spencer didn't like all of them not knowing. It was going to be interesting tomorrow.
From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Twins are the point of a lot of contention between Gods and Humans. Gods revere them in ways that the Humans don't understand unless they are a twin themselves. The lore is that twins are one soul sharing the same body. That they are always trying to get back to each other in one way or another. But that's not it. They are happy alone, and they are not two halves of the same soul. They are two different souls who find comfort in each other. They are soulmates, platonic but still soulmates. They are happier with each other in their lives.

Take that away and who knows what would happen.

Humans have a hard time grasping that people can love each other as deep as twins do and not be in a sexual relationship. Especially if one is male and the other female. They are considered to be "too close," and then the stories start. It's quite hilarious that twins of the same sex are more accepted than twins of different sexes. Because Men and Women can't be friends without sex coming into play in Human minds. I've been friends with my share of God twins, and Human ones as well, but there is a special delight that God twins take in messing with Humans who fuck with Human twins, in any way shape or form.

September 2013

"So...who exactly smote her?" Morgan asked as he sat down beside Spencer on the jet.

"I can't answer that, really. I can narrow it down to a single set of God twins, but that's because I felt them both but as to which one did it? I can't say. They were invisible to my eye until after she was dead."

"Why did they care?" JJ asked. She was settled in the corner seat of the four-person table.

Aaron looked at the team to see which ones might need to have a talk with a therapist. There were some cases that delved a little too deep and hurt without the person knowing for a while. Aaron tried his hardest to make sure that it didn't happen, but sometimes he couldn't see until it was too late. Aaron looked at Spencer to see him looking at Prentiss at the other end of the jet. She was engrossed in texting someone. Aaron knew that she had been friends with the woman she now called her girlfriend long before they became something else. He also knew that Prentiss hadn't gone into too much detail what her job was with the FBI just that she was on a major case squad and got called out a lot. Aaron knew that because he had heard Spencer and her talking about it.

The team dynamic had changed some since Spencer had come out as an Old God and not just any Old God but what's considered the Old God of the world.

"Did you have any siblings?"

"No. I do have a God that I've been friends with for a very long time. He's a randy God, and yes we've had sex a lot. We've had a lot of sex, but over the past one hundred years he's been a little distant and too absorbed in a world of his own, but I've seen him a few times."

"Is he jealous of Hotch?" Morgan asked. The look on his face said that he wasn't that interested in knowing but he was asking and it shocked him. He gave Spencer a grin that said he was doing it to
mess with him.

"He has no reason to be jealous of Hotch at all."

Aaron looked at each of the team that was paying attention to see that none of them knew exactly how to take that.

"I've seen message boards online that talk about how you are basically a man whore who can't commit to anyone because of something that happened to your great love many thousands of years ago," JJ said.

"I guess you could say that, but given how many lovers I have actually taken over my long years I am near a celibate in that regard. I think my average is point eight oh for the average human lifespan. To answer the question that the two of you have now that you know who I am, no I am not stringing Aaron along. I will always miss my Ar, and I will always love him but I loved Aaron before he became a God and I would have loved him still if he had stayed human. I would have moved along in his life with him, aging just enough to make people not bat an eye at a man his age with someone my apparent age if I don't force myself to look different."

Aaron knew that Spencer would never reveal who he was to the team. That was on Aaron to do that, but he hadn't wanted to overwhelm them the last time that this had all come. It had taken them a little shorter of time to come to grips with who Spencer was so Aaron hoped that they didn't freak out too much.

"So reincarnation actually happen?" JJ asked.

"I said so in my book. You don't believe my words in written form?"

"You said it so offhanded."

Spencer smiled.

"It's offhanded to me. I'm not even sure that I can actually die, JJ. I'm knowledge and knowledge doesn't die. Though a few have certainly tried over the man years to stop the spread of knowledge, it can't be hidden for long, and it finds a way to blossom and bloom in the harshest condition. Yes, souls are reborn. I have seen the same people over and over again. No, I won't tell you a single person that has been reborn. It has nothing to do with what the religions of the world talk about. It's the souls thirst to live to experience, even those who have gotten tired of life as they have are reborn, suicide doesn't matter."

Aaron watched the look on JJ's face change from disbelief into peace. He looked at Spencer to see that he had said something to make JJ feel better and then Aaron remembered JJ's sister.

"Gods are not always reborn as Gods," Aaron said, drawing the attention of Morgan, Dave, and JJ to him. Prentiss was still engrossed in her phone. Aaron was glad that she was settling down. She had been drifting some in the wake of Doyle's death. Like she was afraid that setting down roots would do something horrible.

"So Gods are reborn as Humans? Do they have memories of it?" Dave asked. He leaned forward because this would be interesting to him. He loved this kind of stuff.

"Feelings. It's not so much straight memories as you humans would call them. Senses of some things, the feeling of déjà vu. It's never anything concrete, especially if they don't know they used to be a God," Spencer shrugged when Dave gave him a dirty look.
"It's never easy," Aaron said. That drew Dave's attention back to him. "The feeling that you are missing something but not understanding what it was. The fact that things I looked at made me feel like shit and I didn't understand. How a single symbol on a piece of tech that Spencer used all the time would make me feel insanely jealous but at the same time aroused as hell. It really sucked, and I wasn't sure what was going on until I met Spencer's near twin. He says that he doesn't have a sibling, but while Spencer is humanity's thirst for knowledge, he's humanity's thirst for change which is only founded on the thirst for knowledge. They are the twins of each other as much as they are Gods. They were just not born at the same time from Human minds."

"Oh my GOD!" JJ said as she looked at Aaron. She looked between Aaron and Spencer several times before she focused on solely on Aaron. "You are the God of the FBI but I know that Spencer has called you the God of Fidelity, Bravely, and Integrity, which is why you are pretty much the God of the FBI. Who were you before?"

"What's the main difference between Old Gods and New Gods?" Aaron asked.

"Old Gods were made long ago and need worship to stay alive."

"Yes, there is a second thing though. Most Gods are not the Gods of a single thing. Knowledge is vast, so it's understood that he can't juggle more than one thing. The God of Change can also be called a God of Invention and well, he doesn't need anything else, but even the Greek Gods were Gods of more than one thing. That's the other thing, Old Gods are Gods of more than one thing. When I was born the first time, I was the God of Fidelity, Bravely, and Integrity. No, I did not look the same, hence why Spencer didn't know who I was at first. He did fall in love with me, but he didn't know who I was other than the draw to me until the night that I became a God. He felt that spark that tells him that someone is a God and he knew that it was me. That's why he was white as a sheet that night. It wasn't because he had been shot but because of me. I didn't know for a while. Spencer kept that from me but then I was having a hard time adjusting to the fact that I was a God. I probably would have freaked out, even more, to know that I was his long lost former lover who had been killed because of another jealous God who wanted him."

"You always seemed to hover around him since the beginning," Morgan said.

"Don't I know that." Aaron laughed as he leaned back against the side of the jet. He was standing while Dave was sitting in the seat that was diagonal to JJ. Aaron looked down and took a page from Spencer's book and sat on the arm of the couch beside where Spencer was. Spencer smiled at him and moved his leg over to where it pressed into the side of Aaron's. "I don't think you are going ever understand how much I was freaked out that even when I was aching from what Haley had done that I wanted him as much as I did. It was friendship at first. Wanting to be around him but aching so bad. He's a good person to be around. He can be silent for hours and then fill up those silences with the most inane things that take your mind off of things. I don't think that I had a choice of falling in love with him. I think that I would have even if I had stayed with Haley."

"No," Spencer said. He looked up at Aaron. "Impossible. You would never do anything like that. You love with all that you are, but you would never betray that. You love with all or nothing so as soon as she betrayed you like that and you knew it, your love for her started to die. You had friends like that the first time around. They then did something that you didn't like, and you were not friends with them anymore."

"So you two are star crossed lovers?" Dave asked. There was a smirk on his face that Aaron wanted to wipe off of it.

"If you must use such wording, Rossi, yes. This time though I'm not going to let anyone ever take him from me again," Spencer said. His voice was dripping with acid and ice at the same time. It was
harrowing and just a little malicious. The topic kind of dropped.

Aaron knew that they would each come up and talk to him alone about things. It was the way of the team. They would approach Spencer the same way. Each with different thoughts on everything. Secrets were not healthy, but the team at least understood why some things were kept silent until it was a good time to actually speak of them.

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Aaron knew that someone was in the apartment as soon as he touched his hand to the doorknob. It was someone he knew though. Jessica had Jack, loving taking him in while they were on cases for right now. The college student helper had a broken leg at the moment so she couldn't do a lot in watching Jack as she had to stay off of it for most of the day that wasn't her walking between classes. So it was better to just have Jessica watch Jack. Jack was still very active, and Aaron would rather not stress their other sitter out.

"Who is in there?" Aaron asked.

"Think about it, Aaron, and it'll come to you. Close your eyes and just feel." Spencer laid a hand on Aaron's shoulder as Aaron turned the knob. He had the door almost all the way open when he realized that it was Jackson. Jackson was standing with his back to the room. Aaron stepped inside and let Spencer shut and lock the door.

Aaron had done a good bit of looking into Jackson Grimes after finding out everything about him being a God, being as it were Spencer's twin of sorts. Jackson was hiding as a New God at the moment, but Aaron had tracked him back to a few other aliases, Human and God over the years. The FBI was very aware of who he was and just kind of left him alone. The last known time that someone had gone after the God Jax, there had been a lot of deaths on the Human side as they would not give up and stop trying to take him into custody to make him work for them. It had been a Mob Boss, and things had not turned out well for anyone except for innocents. Jackson had made sure that no one had died that wasn't trying to take him.

"Hello," Aaron said.

Jackson turned around, and Aaron saw that there was a drink in his hand. Aaron couldn't make out what it was. Spencer bypassed Aaron and walked up to Jackson taking the drink and downing it.

"At least you went for the most expensive Human shit we have. If that had been anything else you weren't going to get what you came here for," Spencer said. He looked at Jackson for a few seconds before turning to look at Aaron. "Make a decision and then join me upstairs."

Spencer turned and walked to the stairs that were closer to that side of the room. Aaron watched him walk up them, setting the drink tumbler on the stand at the base of the stairs. Aaron turned back to Jackson after Spencer was gone from sight. Jackson looked a lot rough around the edges. He looked nothing like the perfectly put together man that Aaron had seen on the news and even seen when he was talking with Spencer over the computers.

"What happened?"

"I was in California working on a government project. I told the people running it that they were not going to like what happened with something that they were doing. That it would result in death and nothing redeemable. I was right, and the entire team was killed before I could stop them. I destroyed an entire facility and their notes. No one looks at me and sees anything that they need to fear."

"They see an academic and don't look past that and realize that for an Old God to last as long as they
have you are deadly." Aaron stepped closer to him to where he could feel the heat coming off of Jackson. Jackson and Spencer were still so much warmer than Aaron. It was like Aaron was lacking something that they had and Aaron wondered if that was the true difference between the worship that Old Gods got, and the New Gods did not. Aaron brushed two fingers down the side of Jackson's face, Jackson gave him a smile for that. "What do you need?"

"I don't know because what I actually need is something that I don't think you are ready for so I'm at a loss as to what I want in its place."

"Why don't we go up and join Spencer and we will do whatever we want and if any of us wants to back out that's fine, but the other two will keep on?" Aaron asked. He wasn't sure what he would be up for. He had a few fantasies while jerking off in the shower about Jackson. About seeing Jackson with Spencer and just watching. It might be all he was ready for he would wait to see, to make sure before he said that he wanted nothing from Jackson.

"If you are sure?" Jackson offered.

"I wouldn't offer it if I wasn't sure. I don't do anything that I don't want."

"Oh, that I know," Jackson smirked and pulled Aaron into a kiss.

Kissing Jackson was significantly different than kissing Spencer. Spencer kissed with his whole self. He made Aaron think that he was the center of his focus while they were kissing. Jackson acted like he wanted to consume Aaron. Like he wanted to just be there forever and never let go of Aaron. It was seductive.

Aaron was vaguely aware that they were moving. Jackson turned them, and he started to go up the stairs. Aaron gripped the front of Jackson's suit jacket as they climbed up the stairs, only stopping twice for Jackson to push Aaron into the railing and take what Aaron was freely offering. Aaron felt entirely solid ground under his feet before he realized that they had climbed that far up the stairs.

"So what are we doing?" Spencer asked.

Aaron pulled away from Jackson and found that they were in their bedroom. Aaron had lost track of time and steps as he and Jackson kissed. Aaron kept on looking around and found that Spencer was on the bed naked with a few condoms out on the dresser, which Aaron hadn't even known that they had, as well as a bottle of lube laying on his chest. Aaron could not tell if he had used it on himself or not while Aaron and Jackson had been talking and then making their way up to the bedroom while kissing.

It seemed that Jackson lost his ability to speak because he just stared at Spencer. Aaron reached out with his elbow and knocked it into Jackson's. The man startled and looked at Aaron with a grin on his face.

"I think I know what I want," Aaron said. He stepped up to the closet door to start to strip off. Jackson walked around the bed and entered the other door of the closet. Aaron watched him as he stripped with military precision. That was kind of shocking because he didn't seem like the person to join the military in any way shape or form, but then again Spencer stripped off like that sometimes. It was probably from a very long time ago and just stuck around when their brains were focused on other things. Aaron was nearly naked when he heard Spencer making the same noises he made when Aaron was fingering him open. That meant that he was starting without them and Aaron did like that.

"Stop him," Aaron said to Jackson. Jackson took off like a bullet as he was already naked. Aaron followed as soon as he had his socks off. He found that Jackson was straddling Spencer's stomach
and pinning his hands down above his head as they kissed. That was more erotic than it had any right being especially since Aaron usually felt a damned bit of jealousy when it came to Spencer and the flirting that he did with other Gods. There was none of that there with the three of them. Aaron knew that the two of them would never lie to him, he knew that deep down inside even though he had never spent much time at all with Jackson.

"Keep him like that," Aaron said as he walked around the bed to crawl in at the bottom. Aaron picked up Spencer's feet and placed them so that his legs were spread open wide and his knees were bent. He grabbed the lube from where it had fallen at the side of Spencer's body probably when Jackson had grabbed him. Spencer had slicked up his hole well, and Aaron wanted to make sure that he was really ready for what Aaron wanted to happen. Aaron grinned as Spencer tried to shove down onto his fingers as he pushed two inside. Aaron tried not to give in to the want to just fuck him. He had plans, and he wanted to see them happen. Aaron looked at the condoms and then down at Spencer's cock. He knew that the two of them were clean. "Are you clean?"

Jackson lifted up and twisted as much as he could in the position that he was in to look at Aaron. There were a few things that were passed between Gods but didn't affect humans just like human diseased didn't affect Gods.

"Always. I don't play around with anything when it comes to Humans. Even though nothing really can be transferred, I don't play without a cover. Except for Spencer."

"Then we can play without." Aaron scooted up to where he was plastered to Jackson's back, looking down at Spencer who looked already so damned close to orgasm. "Fuck his mouth."

"You got it," Jackson said. He let go of Spencer's arms but didn't let him lower them before he scooted up. Jackson tilted Spencer's face the way that he wanted before brushing the tip of his cock over his lips. Spencer opened up, and Jackson slowly slid his cock inside. Aaron moved back down the bed to keep on fingeriing Spencer. He waited until Spencer was nearly there before he stopped. The sound that Spencer made told Aaron that he hadn't wanted him to do that.

Aaron enjoyed watching as Jackson fucked Spencer's mouth, doing fast and deep after Spencer had adjusted. Aaron reached down just when he thought Spencer was close to orgasm again and pulled on his balls, stopping him.

"Let's switch, well sort of. I want you on your hands and knees, Spencer."

"I should just throw you down on the bed and sit on your cock," Spencer said, but when Aaron moved, and Jackson got off of him, he did as Aaron wanted. Aaron walked around the bed to get at the head of it. The pillows were tossed down to the ground to make room for Aaron to get to his knees there. He gripped Spencer's hair, holding his head up and his eyes right at Aaron's cock as Jackson got settled in at Spencer's ass.

"Jackson's going to take his turn with you Spencer while I take your mouth then when he's done, I'm going to fuck your ass until I come. Only then are you allowed to come. You come, and you won't be touched the rest of the night."

"Oh yeah, there's the Ar that we know," Jackson said. He slicked up his cock a little after finding the bottle buried in the bed. Aaron relaxed his hold on Spencer's hair as Jackson slide inside of Spencer. He took his time even though they all three knew that Spencer didn't need it. It was a tease. It was a damned good tease because Aaron could feel Spencer's breaths in pants on his cock. It was only when Jackson was fully inside of Spencer that Aaron reached down with his free hand to guide his cock into Spencer's mouth.
It felt like riding a bike, the way that Aaron and Jackson set about a pace that had Spencer near shaking apart in arousal, their cocks moving in tandem inside of Spencer. Aaron felt it when Jackson came, his gasps being the only sound that he made but the stuttering and then stilling of his hips as he pressed all the way inside of Spencer being the only outward sign. Aaron watched as Spencer reached for his own cock, stopping him from coming at the same time.

Aaron was gentle as he pulled his cock from Spencer's mouth to allow him to take a few panting breaths before he took his turn with Spencer. Jackson walked to the bathroom, and Aaron heard water running as he got control of himself before sitting down and pulling Spencer up to kiss him. His lips were swollen and red, as well as shiny from saliva. Aaron could taste his release in Spencer's mouth, and he couldn't help but moan. Spencer jerked making Aaron look to see what Jackson was doing. Jackson was cleaning up Spencer a little. The rag was thrown in the direction of the bathroom the sound of its splat echoing through the room.

"I think that I wanna see him sit on your lap and take your cock, that way I can play with his," Jackson said.

Spencer nodded his agreement before turning around. Jackson settled in close to Spencer and helped him lower down onto Aaron's cock as Aaron held it still for him. Aaron closed his eyes as Spencer's hole slide down his cock. Spencer was relaxed, and his hole didn't tighten on Aaron at all until he was all the way down. Aaron could feel the warmth from Jackson's release, but it wasn't anything that freaked him out. Aaron wrapped an arm around Spencer's chest to hold him still as he adjusted to having hot and wet wrapped around his cock. He did not want to come too soon. Aaron looked down Spencer's body, seeing his cock standing up, begging for attention and wanting someone to touch. Jackson had a hold of Spencer's thighs, holding him open. Spencer was unable to move at all, and he never looked more serene than at that moment. Spencer's eyes were shut tight, and he was panting, probably trying to control himself.

"Fuck yourself on me," Aaron whispered into Spencer's ear, just loud enough for Jackson to hear as well. Aaron settled in and let Spencer control everything. Even when Spencer slowed down and it was like torture to Aaron, he didn't care. It was only delaying Spencer's orgasm as much as his own. Aaron watched Jackson as much as he watched Spencer. Jackson was looking at Spencer and Aaron liked it was a feast that he was never going to get enough of. Aaron could understand why they kept on coming back to Jackson time and again if this what they got every single time. It was erotic and could become addictive. Aaron was glad that the God spent a lot of time away from the area or Aaron could see him wanting him more and more. It was well known that Jackson never spent a night alone unless he wanted it, so it wasn't like Jackson was going to be pining for them.

Spencer reached up and pulled Aaron's head around to where they could kiss, it was an odd angle, but Aaron didn't care. He kept on thrusting up with his hips just enough to make a slight smacking sound as Spencer thrust down. It was times like that Aaron most believed that he and Spencer had spent a long time together. There were no words needed, but there was an energy shared between them. Aaron dropped his arm down from Spencer's chest to his stomach, splaying his hand there and held Spencer just that little more closer to him.

The kiss broke, and Aaron turned to see that Jackson had finally done what he said he was going to, which was playing with Spencer's cock but he wasn't playing in a normal way. He was bent down and had Spencer's cock in his mouth. Aaron tried not to rock Spencer's body too much as he chased his orgasm. Aaron couldn't help that when he came, he clenched his teeth around Spencer's shoulder. It made Spencer buck just a little, but there was no sound of Jackson choking, so Aaron stopped paying attention to him for a few seconds as he kept on thrusting into Spencer until finally, his cock was too soft but between that and Jackson's ministrations on Spencer's cock. He came with a cry,
jerking in Aaron's hold. Aaron looked down to see that Jackson was milking Spencer dry. He came up off the cock with the sound of slurping and then he was kissing Spencer for a few seconds and then Aaron as well.

Time kind of losing meaning as Jackson cleaned them up. It was strange to have someone do it, but Aaron felt that Jackson needed that so he allowed it. He and Spencer were tucked into bed and covered up before Jackson got in on the other side of Spencer. It seemed like he was asleep in seconds.

"He sleeps?"

"Yes. He does. It's when his brain comes up with things, unrestrained by anything else," Spencer answered. He yawned, but that was it. It didn't seem like he was tired.

"I think I can do it, sharing you, sharing me with him, just him."

"That's what you said last time too," Spencer grinned at Aaron and leaned in for a soft kiss. Aaron didn't try and turn it into more. He liked this, the soft press of lips with nothing else to it. It was one of the things that I really liked about them now that they were more settled when they could just be.
Humans put too much time into labels. There is a time and place for them, but for the most part Humans, they only see the labels and dismiss the whole of what a person really is. Being gay or lesbian does not make a person evil. Being into domination, submission, sadism, or masochism does not make a person a deviant. When Humans started to label those who were different with labels that were inherently negative they shaped the course of what their lives were going to be. It's how those who are genuinely deviant are able to ride under the radar as it were. They hold out a public image that is the perfection of what it means to be a perfect and pure Human and degrade those who were good and true to being good but have a public face of being different. There is a Human author who talks about all that glitters isn't gold and that there are those who wear a fair face but feel foul. He got it right because Humans don't trust their instincts that much anymore.

They see the outward image and then disregard what they feel about it all, and that is the issue with Humans. They have allowed themselves to be domesticated too much. That's how the genuinely deviant learn to move around in the world. They show a pretty face and hide a dark heart and get away with anything and everything until they lose control and stop being able to hide that dark heart.

There is a reason that a lot of people who get caught, their neighbors talk about how good they are. Some of those with dark hearts try and drop the blame on others, and they can get away with it. Those who are already considered evil can never become good in the eyes of many. Yet, Humans can change in either direction, but they have to be given a chance to change without being blamed for everything time and again.

October 2013

Aaron looked at the rooftop garden that looked like a jungle paradise. Aaron had not been up there in the past few months, the hot weather was just too much for him and then with case after case made for not wanting to put out the energy to do things after he was home. The things that had to be done left little room for the fun things. That was why Spencer had put on this dinner of sorts. It was the team and their significant others. Morgan was bringing Savannah, of which Aaron was so glad that Morgan was settling in with her. Prentiss was also bringing her elusive girlfriend. JJ was obviously bringing Will. Jack and Henry were having a sleepover at JJ, and Will's with the new helper for the new school year that Aaron and Spencer had hired. Her name was Summer. The former that they had hired ended up having more wrong with her leg than just a break so she had dropped out and went home to get major surgery that would require many months of rehabilitation as well not moving for at least a month.

"This looks awesome, Pretty Boy," Morgan said as he stepped through the door.

Aaron turned to look and saw that it was only him and Savannah. They were all dressed down, jeans and nice shirts. The weather was warm enough to wear T-shirts were comfortable, but there were areas with fire pits in case the air got cold as the night went on. It wasn't supposed to, but Spencer was prepared for everything.

"Thank you. It's been years and years in the making. I have a great deal of creatures who tend to it.
They are elsewhere tonight so don't worry about disturbing them.” Spencer handed over two glasses of whatever punch Spencer had made. Aaron had stayed out of the kitchen after the third time the back of his hand had been slapped with a spoon for taking bites of food. Spencer had been in a good mood, and Aaron hadn't wanted to ruin that. Spencer had spent the entire day cooking for this. The apartment had smelled like damned good food and lunch had been sandwiches. The meat had been cooked by Spencer during the night and was on trays for the meal tonight, but there was a lot of other things as well, and Aaron hadn't been able to eat a single bit of it. Jack had been fed dinner before Summer had taken him to JJ and Will's and had taken food for Henry as well, which was what everyone else was eating for dinner so that they were not left out.

Spencer wasn't at the tables protecting the food anymore, so Aaron walked over and casually grabbed one of the bacon wrapped meatballs that were dipped in a sauce of some kind. Aaron ate the meatball in one bit and turned around to walk away from the table and found that Spencer was standing there with a raised eyebrow. Aaron grinned at him and shrugged his shoulders, but he did allow a little bit of chagrin on his face.

"You don't have to sneak food like a kid, Aaron. I told you twenty minutes ago you could eat. I think I should have made sure that you were listening.” Spencer reached around Aaron and grabbed two meatballs, popping one into his mouth and chewing before tossing the toothpick into the trash. He walked away with the second. Aaron turned around and grabbed another. He had eaten the other way too fast to enjoy the taste of it.

Dave was walking up the stairs as Aaron moved to the punch table. The two guest rooms were already prepared as well as the pullout couch in the office. Dave had already said that he was going to get a cab to and from. JJ and Will, Prentiss and her girlfriend, and Morgan and Savannah were going to stay the night and was going to the three bedrooms, it was a toss-up who would be drunk enough to not care that they were sleeping in Aaron's room while Garcia was going to sleep on the pullout.

"Welcome, Dave," Aaron said as he stepped up to the man with a glass of punch in each hand, giving Dave one of them.

"No wonder Reid likes this building. This place is pretty damned nice." Dave's eyes were wandering everywhere, and Aaron had to agree that it was nice looking.

"He's worked on it a long time, well him and a few creatures. There is a lot that lives up here. I'm fairly certain that I have not met all of them and I don't think that I will. Even though creatures are made by the same magic that makes New Gods and Old Gods, the New Gods tend to hate the creatures because they were here long before."

"Yes, well. I'm sure that they will grow to like you. They are Reid's friends, and I doubt that they will hate you for long. So is Prentiss here yet?" Dave asked looking around.

"No. She's not here yet nor is JJ and Will. I'm sure that they will arrive in their own time. We told everyone between six and seven, and it's not even halfway through the hour.

The sound of laughter and more than two voices filtered up the stairs. Aaron picked out JJ and Prentiss, of course, Will's was easy to pick out. There was a fourth voice, and it took a few seconds for him to realize that it was Jessica. Aaron looked at Spencer who was talking to Morgan. Aaron wondered if they had forgotten about a plan for Jessica to get a night with Jack.

"I'm just glad that JJ was able to talk the man down out of killing himself in front of his daughter," Morgan said as Aaron was getting close to them.
"Jessica is here," Aaron said as he stepped next to Spencer. Spencer turned away from Morgan and gave Aaron a weird look. Then it looked like something came over his face, and he grinned.

"Morgan, come and meet Jessica, Aaron's ex-sister-in-law and our sometimes babysitter for Jack and it seems like Prentiss's girlfriend."

"Spencer," Aaron said, but when he turned to look at where JJ and Will were entering the open roof area, he saw that just behind was Prentiss and Jessica with their arms linked. Aaron looked back at Spencer and glared at him. "How did you guess that?"

"Two weeks ago Prentiss came into work wearing a different perfume than normal. It was softer and more floral. I knew that I had smelled it somewhere but didn't know where. I commented on it, and she said that she had stayed the night at her girlfriend's and was wearing one of hers. Jessica wore it that one night when she was dropping off the present for Jack for when he was sick seven months ago and was bedridden. She had been going out on a date with her friend, possible more she had said. You promised that if she needed a background check, you would do it. I don't think she's going to need a background check."

"Hotch, Reid," Prentiss said as she stepped up to them with Jessica in tow. "I would like you to-"

Spencer stepped forward before Prentiss could even name Jessica and gave Jessica a kiss, and it seemed whispered something into her ear. Jessica blushed and shoved him back.

"You are a cad, Spencer."

"Oh, I've not been called that for a long while. Jessica, welcome to my rooftop hideaway from it all. I'll show you Jack's favorite plant later. Jessica Brooks, I would like you to meet Derek Morgan and his date Savannah Hayes. David Rossi, don't worry he'll keep his hands to himself, Prentiss scares him. I'm sure that Prentiss already introduced you to JJ and Will. The only team member missing is Garcia."

"She was parking her car when we were walking into the building."

"And how do you know her?" Prentiss asked glaring at Spencer a little bit.

"Brooks," Morgan said, and he looked at Aaron and then back at Jessica. "Wow, you do look a lot like your sister, Ma'am."

"Yes, I do have enough matching features to her. Jack likes it."

"Sister? You've talked about her in-" Prentiss stopped, and Aaron was pretty damned sure that she figured out that she connected Jack to it all. "Oh shit." Prentiss looked at Aaron, and there was a little fear there.

"Don't worry, Prentiss. You won't get fired if you break her heart. You might get the worst jobs for a very long time, but that's it."

"Though there is no telling what I'll do to you," Spencer said with a wicked look on his face. Jessica started laughing, and she hugged Spencer tightly. She looked at Will and Savannah. Spencer shook his head no. Aaron figured that it was about asking who knew that he was Mimir.

"Well, it seems that I know what your job is, Emily. You've kept the details enough that even I didn't figure out that you were BAU. You said you were a major case respondent but not this major."

"Let's leave all work talk away from this party," Spencer said, and he looked at Morgan as he said it.
Morgan raised his hands and smiled.

"Yes, let's. At least I'm glad I didn't eat beforehand. Random parties where one doesn't know the food are very interesting to go to if the food sucks. Spencer's food is wonderful."

"Yes, it is," Aaron said.

"So Will and JJ, Morgan and Savannah, who is staying in Aaron and I's rooms?" Spencer asked.

"Why are Prentiss and Jessica exempt from that?" Morgan asked.

"She's all but laid claim to one of the guest rooms already. When she stays over while watching Jack while we are on cases. It's got clothes and toiletries already in the guest room. I'm not going to make her move it all."

"Will and I will take your bedroom," JJ said.

"Thank God," Morgan said which as it always did, made Spencer laugh.

"Drinks!" Spencer yelled out, and he waved everyone over to the punch. Aaron realized that while a few had got into it, it was still damned full. Aaron narrowed his eyes and looked at his lover. Spencer winked. Aaron was not going to ask what was in it or what was keeping it filled. It would be better if he didn't. Spencer wouldn't feed them anything that was bad for them or would actually get them that drunk.

Everyone talked, ate, and drank until the late hours of the night. At one point, Aaron found himself in the little cabana area where he and Spencer had eaten a lot of meals when they were just friends, with Jessica sitting beside him.

"Why did you never tell me you were into females?" Aaron asked. He heard Garcia's laughter as Morgan and Spencer shared stupid things they had done in college. Morgan had more stories about it while

"Haley hated it when I came out to her. I have never told Mom or Dad. I just found it easier to keep my mouth shut."

"Yet, Spencer and I...it would be very wrong for me to hate you for wanting the same sex when I am that way with Spencer."

Aaron looked up as someone entered the little area and he saw that it was Spencer who was carrying fresh drinks for them all. Jessica accepted hers with a soft thanks while Aaron looked at his for a few seconds before he took it. Spencer settled on the floor, sitting with his back to the pole that made sure that he didn't break the cabana area.

"It kept it quiet for so long that I just never tell anyone. Emily was a shock."

"I want to hear how you met her."

"There is a bar near where I live, where Emily moved and they do a ladies night, but it's not a standard ladies night it's a ladies that like ladies night. It confuses a great deal of the women that show up who don't like the same sex. They leave with little issue usually. They do theme nights each night of the week and then the weekends are open to everyone. I met her there. She was with a few friends who were there for moral support, they were straight but helped Emily pick out ladies to dance with. It was the first time that I have ever gone somewhere to pick anyone up. I wasn't sure what the hell I was doing, and Emily was just so sweet. I'm the reason we've taken so long to get to
know each other before we step up to anything else. Emily has stayed over a few times but never in my bedroom."

"I was out and proud over in Interpol," Prentiss said as she sat down beside Jessica, she wrapped an arm around her, and they looked cute together. Aaron had to admit that he could see them being happy together. Jessica would ground and keep Prentiss from feeling like she was drowning and drifting alone while Prentiss would pull Jessica out of the little shelter that she had stuck herself.

Aaron listened to the story of how they met and how from there it was always public places where they were never alone, even just going out to dinner. There was no pressure from either one of them. Prentiss was smitten, and Aaron could tell that Jessica cared a lot for her.

"So tonight is the first night you two are going to sleep in the same bed? And you choose to do it in a strange place?" Spencer asked.

"Not so strange, not even for me," Prentiss said.

Aaron had to give her that. It was not that strange, Prentiss had stayed over a few times, even if it was before the renovation.

Spencer called a halt to the party when the Humans were starting to nod off where they were standing or sitting. There was not a rush to get turns in the bathroom as J.J., and Will used Aaron and Spencer’s while Jessica used the bathroom for the guests, Prentiss used their room, and Morgan and Savannah changed in their bedroom.

Aaron watched as Spencer set himself up on the couch with his laptop on his lap. Aaron grabbed the two cups of coffee that Spencer had made up for them, and he settled himself in beside Spencer on the couch, handing over the cup to him. Spencer had the bowl of chips on his far side, a few in his mouth being chewed. Aaron took the nod as his thanks.

"You know that acting like her older brother is just going to upset her. She doesn't have an older brother to know that you are just trying to look out for her. We can already see the change in Prentiss since they had become even just friends, Aaron. You can't just be mean just because you think you want to protect her. I don't think that Haley protected her little sister well at all. If I ever got to talk to her alone without her realizing it was me, I could probably write an entire book on her type of mental issues that she has."

"Entitlement is a lot of it. She thinks that she deserves more than she has because she is pretty and smart enough. Humanity has always been like that. There is nothing to be done for it." Aaron turned to where he could wiggle between Spencer and the couch so he could have a little to rest on Spencer’s shoulder. He felt the computer being moved a little bit and then Spencer’s arm was being wrapped around his body. That put Aaron in a weird position but one that he could read in. He grabbed his book from where it was laying face down open to his page, and he started to read. He thought about what Spencer had said and knew that Spencer was right. Aaron had always felt brotherly toward Jessica. Haley at one point at been jealous because she thought that Aaron was in love with Jessica.

Aaron looked and saw that he didn't remember a single word he read, so he stopped trying to focus on that and instead focus on his thoughts. Aaron had seen Haley's jealousy as stupid, but he could see where now she might have genuinely thought that no one could love Jessica. Aaron was actually pretty shocked that Haley had tried to shove a wedge between them all by telling Aaron that Jessica was a lesbian. Aaron remembered boyfriends when Jessica had been younger, and there was one man who had stuck around the longest but then a few years later he was in the papers after he had been found beaten. Aaron had looked into it because the man had been lovely to Jessica, but it had
ended, and no one had told him why. The police report had said that he had been suspected of being gay and that was why he had been beaten like he had been. Aaron now believed that because it was very plausible that they had both been beards for each other. Aaron’s opinion of the Brooks family had been high right up until Haley had been convicted of what she had and her parents hadn't even thought she did anything wrong. He could understand them protecting their child, but they had wanted grandkids as much as Aaron had wanted kids.

"I know it's hard, but you have got to let Haley go. You tried to be the best husband that you could be. It's not your fault that she didn't understand the man that you were. If you had gone into politics, what do you think would have happened if she had been found of abortion when you would be a strong family candidate? She would have ended your career."

"No, I know that she would have. You are correct on that."

"Read your book," Spencer said nudging Aaron a little.

"If the apartment weren't full of people, I would suggest other things to get my mind off."

"After they leave. I'm feeding them breakfast, and then they are getting kicked out. JJ and Will last. We should have just enough time for something fun before Summer comes back with Jack. Then we can have that day going and getting Jack's Halloween costume like he wants."

"Sounds like a perfect day to me," Aaron said. He picked up his book again and found his page, his mind finally engaging with the book. It did sound like a perfect day for the three of them. He was looking forward to it.
Chapter 33

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

I hold many secrets in my head. Some I keep because I want to keep them, others I keep because sharing the secrets will not lessen the pain they make in me, and sometimes sharing them would cause more harm than good. There are also secrets that for all intents and purposes are locked in my head never to be revealed because well...I’ve forgotten them. I cannot see the future, but sometimes I can connect things in ways that make it seem like I can. It's more that I've been around for a very long time, and I know what Humans who are lying can get up to. Then there are the moments that I can't even understand what could go wrong only that something can and I don't like not knowing. Humans are sensitive creatures, especially adult ones. Even if they are told that doing the thing will hurt, or will get them killed, most of the time they will still do it because someone tried to tell them that they can't. You see children doing it when they are young. They learn quickly, but it's forgotten again by the time they are adults.

Though there are Humans who can't see another way out of a situation and that's when they ask for help.

Seeing the results of things I knew were going to end badly and seeing how badly they ended always make me feel just a little smug. Though if you ask my lover, I have no reason not to be smug about anything. He's a little biased, but that's okay because I would do anything for him.

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"So you said to ask in two weeks. It's been over two weeks," Aaron said as he opened up the car door for Spencer to get in. Spencer frowned at Aaron, but he got into the car. Aaron looked down to make sure that Spencer's arm was entirely inside before he shut the door. Aaron opened the back seat door for JJ as well. Her car was broken down, and so she had been getting rides with Aaron and Spencer. Spencer didn't like that he could not drive.

"How is the arm, Spence?" JJ asked as she scooted to sit in the middle seat of the car. It was a little quirk that she had. Aaron figured it was from years of riding in the back of the SUV and being a little more petite and being stuck in the middle but also because it was usually how she sat when she relayed information to the rest of the team.

"I go back for x-rays in the morning, and they will decide if they want to take off the cast."

"I don't think I've ever seen a God in a cast before."

Aaron started to laugh, and the look of pure derision on Spencer's face just made him laugh more.

"What?" JJ asked.

"He is in a cast because the doctor that he had just moved to the area. He's worked on Spencer before when he was shot in the same arm."

"You are only telling half of it, Aaron. Well technically much less than half but that's neither here nor there. Doctor Sheets was very upset at how I managed to nearly shatter all the bones in my arm while hunting terrorists when we went to rescue the new Section Chief for the local terrorism unit, and that woman who used to be an agent who was kidnapped. He called me a stupid idiot with more
knowledge than smarts and told me that my punishment for doing something stupid like go into a room with unknown people was to be in a cast. I hate them, and I hate the Human who invented them."

"So Doctor Sheets knows you well?" JJ asked with a grin on her face. Aaron could see it in the rear view mirror as he backed out of the parking spot. The traffic in the parking lot for the Academy was pretty empty of moving vehicles as it was in the middle of the afternoon but after the case they had with a pair of killers who were working on rekindling their romance by killing people was a little much to handle with is being Valentine's Day, so Aaron had everyone finish up paperwork today and then they were allowed to go home. Morgan was going to see Savannah at work as she took the Valentine's shift as she thought that Morgan would be gone longer. Aaron and Spencer were going to pick up Jack from New Haven after they took JJ home. It was a lot of back tracking, but as Aaron had taken the car to work and Jack had everyone with him, Peaches, Hubert, Ri, and Stormy, it wasn't like there was going to be room. Storm took up most of the back seat with her tail and wings. Jack didn't mind her stretched all over him.

"Doctor Sheets is the one that treated his gunshot to the arm the night that I became a God. He's also the God that handled my intake paperwork for being a God. He told us that he moved to the area to become a private practice doctor for the Gods that are seemingly congregating in the area." Aaron listened as Spencer and JJ talked for a little bit longer as he got them through the base and then out of Quantico. Just as they were hitting the highway between DC and Quantico, Aaron heard his cell phone go off. Aaron groaned and heard matching ones from the other two.

"I'll get it." Spencer fumbled into Aaron's pocket as the left arm was the one in a cast meaning Spencer had to reach across himself and turn in the seat to be able to get the phone. "JJ I can't get it."

JJ leaned up as Spencer sat back and she deftly got the phone from Aaron's jacket pocket. She handed it to Spencer. Aaron glanced at Spencer as he unlocked the phone to read the text.

"It's not a case. It's Jessica, and she's on her way to get Jack from school. It seems the school is dismissing a little early due to the fact that a pipe has burst and the first floor is a little flooded. There is also a note that Jack wants to take Jessica out for Valentine's Day."

"Doesn't she have plans with Prentiss?" JJ asked.

"She does, but they are just staying home. I'll call and get them a reservation for three at that place that Jessica has talked about wanting to try. I know a young man on the staff, and he owes me big for giving him an interview. One of his God teachers spilled a way to get in contact with me. We did a phone interview but still. He's getting two degrees after getting through culinary school at two different places. Another genius who started at thirteen. He'll get them a table and Jack and take them both out. He'll pay most of the bill and tell me how much it is." Spencer looked down at his phone that Aaron hadn't realized he had out and started to type very fast one handed. Though is long fingers helped with that a lot.

"Jack already asked for an advance on his allowance, it's not enough for a place like that, but he'll be able to cover at least most of two of the three meals."

"That's good to know. I'll tell him to tell the waiter to give him a little change back. Though knowing the people who work there, I have eaten there a good bit as the kid is an awesome sous chef, the waitresses might chip in enough to cover the rest of his bill."

Aaron knew then the place that Spencer was talking about. He adored the Japanese style shrimp dumplings there, and there was usually an order of three placed of them as an appetizer. That was making Aaron's mouth water. He would have to see about what kind of food Spencer wanted to eat.
for dinner. They had planned a kind of big meal for Jack on Valentine's to have a nice day with him, but Jack was old enough that if he wanted to take Jessica out, he could. Aaron was pretty sure that it was to get to know Prentiss better. Jack had not been happy knowing that his aunt was dating. Jack had attached himself to Jessica and used her as a replacement mother. Jack missed Sheila, and he liked Summer, but there was something about Jessica that Jack just really liked.

Spencer said that it was the family connection even if Jack was still a little too young to understand that. Jessica though was having trouble finding a good job. She had a great one, but the debacle with her sister had caused her to be fired. Aaron was upset about that and had tried to talk her into letting him help her find a job, but she was very stubborn and refused. Haley, of course, didn't care about the fallout of her actions. The mail was screened, Aaron had found out, and everything that she sent to them through friends was confiscated. Only a single letter had made it through, and it was because Haley had sent the unwritten on envelope to her friend and her friend had been the one to write the address, so the handwriting had not been a tip-off. It had been addressed to Jack who had given it to Aaron as soon as he had opened it. There was still a restraining order in place, and it included written missives so Haley had more time added onto her sentence and all of her mail was now opened up and looked at before it left. Aaron only knew this because Spencer knew it and had told him when he had asked point blank.

"Do you really want to know?" Spencer asked after about ten more minutes of driving. He had been texting on his phone like crazy and ten on Aaron's for a few minutes. It took Aaron about a minute to understand what Spencer was asking.

"Yes. I want to understand why you rushed into a fucking room where we had no clue who was in there."

"I can't see the future, but I can follow paths to possible eventualities. It's like seeing the hundreds of paths that could be taken. Every single instance was visible to me. I saw one thing, and one thing only and that meant that unless there was another force acted upon, that future was going to come to pass and that was the codes given over. I could not allow that to happen, Aaron."

"Why?" Aaron asked. It would have been no issue to change things and make those codes impossible to be used again. To also track the information that was gained and fix that. It would be bad yes but not impossible to fix.

"Because that project was a black ops project that no one knew the whole truth about except those on the team. It was not what we were told, and there was a reason that the Director forced us to be the team to go after the people who had taken Agent Cruz and Agent Fable. That project was a way to set up trackers on Gods and follow them if it worked with the targeted Humans. No God in the world would want that to happen. We follow the law of where we go. There is a reason that many states don't have as many Gods in them given the laws that they have passed. The Gods have not fought it because it's the states right to choose what it wants as far as laws like that go. We don't need to protest that. Thankfully, as an FBI agent who travels, we are exempt from those laws. The thing is that those states are seeing a small decline in a lot of things. The normal Humans are going to notice, and they are going to do something about it."

"There is something else as well. I read your report. You mentioned a case file that I don't have access to, and when Cruz came down to talk to me about it, he said it was above his pay grade as well."

"The actual file is but as the basis for why the file was started is not. Cruz doesn't know that though. Agent Fable was not the State Department's first choice in who to send overseas to get the women of terrorists to talk. She wasn't even the second or third. She was the fourth. When the second and third
found out that the first had refused and got the Director involved in refusing, well they backed down. Fable wasn't told any of that."

"They wanted ME to do that?" JJ asked.

"Yes." Spencer's answer was short and to the point.

The rest of the ride was in silence. Even after Aaron had dropped off JJ at home, he and Spencer didn't talk. It was a punch in the gut. If things had gone anywhere near what they did with JJ that meant that the team would have woke up to JJ being gone one morning. Taken and then they would have had to have hunted her down like a victim.

Aaron parked in their spot and saw that most of the apartment building was gone for the day based on the cars. The restaurant was shut down as Jin and Petal were in Japan to visit friends. Aaron was sure that it was a whole bunch of Old Gods. He didn't ask who and they didn't offer. Spencer had cooked them dinner in there one night, and Aaron had been a little shocked, but when he saw one of the other students who was staying in the other apartments cooking the next night he realized that while the place was closed to public it didn't seem to be closed to those who lived there. Though the only ones in the building now were Aaron and Spencer and a mess of college students. As the other families had moved out, Aaron saw that Spencer just moved more and more students in. There was an apartment filled with four transgender students. It was safer Spencer said, and Aaron could agree on that as they were not an age where they could work and afford a place to live as well as college.

The one young lady who had been a late addition to the apartment a few weeks into school had shown up on their doorstep with a black eye and torn clothes. Spencer had disappeared with her for a few hours, and then three days later it was a big deal when three men were arrested for assault. The young lady didn't talk to many in the building besides Spencer, but it was okay as she was at least smiling at Aaron recently.

"So what are we doing for food?" Aaron asked.

"That's going to be a surprise," Spencer said with a grin on his face.

Aaron looked at Spencer's arm for a few seconds before he got out of the car. Spencer stayed in the seat until Aaron got the door open and held out his hand. Spencer endured Aaron's show of caring for him in ways that were not standard. Aaron had won that fight early on, and Spencer just kept his mouth shut. Aaron would not be shocked about anything that Spencer knew how to do one handed given how flexible and adaptable he had proven to be in other aspects. So Aaron would allow Spencer to keep his secrets as far as food went. It wasn't like he would be able to hide what he was cooking.

The stairs were silent as they trudged up them. The apartment was empty which was odd as no little creatures were running around. Aaron had got used to at least having Peaches under foot all of the time. Ri and Stormy were wherever Jack was or in Jack's room unless Stormy was in her little house.

Spencer unlocked the door and Aaron slipped past him to turn off the alarm. The days of Spencer leaving things unlocked were long gone. Spencer hadn't needed prompting at all to remember to lock the door and set the alarm when they came and went. Jack had taken a long time to get used to sleeping alone in bed. Ri, Peaches, Stormy, and sometimes Hubert stayed overnight when Aaron and Spencer were home, but still, Jack ended up in their bed. Spencer didn't blink at it while Aaron remembered never being allowed in his parents' bed at age two much less at age eight. Spencer had spent an hour talking about why it was better, and in the end, Aaron had kissed his quiet and had never brought it up again.
"I'm going to go to the office and do some work," Aaron said as he laid his briefcase by the office door. The layout of the apartment was something that Aaron had been a little unsure of, but it all grew on him. Aaron liked the office being far away from the door, but then it was quieter. The library wasn't bad where it was because Spencer can block out anything when he was reading. Aaron vividly remembered Spencer with a screaming Jack on his chest because he was in pain from croup, reading in the bathroom. Aaron couldn't stand it, and he had been on the far side of the house while Haley had been out. Spencer though had a long time to get used to the sounds of the world and learn to block them out. Touch was the best way to get his attention.

Aaron secluded himself into his office. There were a few things that he needed to get done that were for the family accounts, so it was a good idea to take care of them while Spencer was relaxing a little bit. With Sean in jail, there were things with his accounts that Aaron needed to take care of. Sean had already signed overall control of his accounts to Aaron, Sean's trust had been precisely like Aaron's so his money was locked down pretty tight and was unable to blow it all in one go. Aaron was going to set him up with the money he needed to live a pretty good life inside of prison. Aaron already had a few guards that he knew from working cases in New York to keep an eye on him. Sean didn't need a lot of watching as he was in a minimum security prison. Spencer had done really good at getting him the best possible sentence and five years in prison wasn't that bad. It could have been a lot worse if not for Spencer. Aaron really hoped that Sean actually kept up with his promise and stuck to a good life after he got out. As long as Sean tried, Spencer and Aaron would make sure that he had everything that he needed to live on his own.

It was hours later, and there was a smell that was familiar coming from the kitchen, but Aaron didn't budge until his stomach started to growl. He shut down the computer and cleaned up his files, he had plans that involved him and Spencer and Spencer doing nothing but lying bed and taking what Aaron wanted to give him for later. Aaron walked to the door and opened it, finding that Spencer was headed to him. The smell was a lot stronger in the open air of the room. It smelled like a sushi shop. Aaron had been on a single trip to Japan to teach about profiling to their top police who were going to spread it out among the rest in the nation. Aaron had stayed two extra weeks as a vacation to himself. Haley had joined him for the second week of the vacation, so that had helped mollify her for losing him for almost a month.

Aaron's mouth started to water at the sight of many rolls on the counter, some were cut, and some were not. There was also some of the sashimi, and the sauce he was smelling was eel sauce. Aaron looked at Spencer to see him smiling. Aaron stepped up, mindful of Spencer's arm and kissed him. Spencer allowed it for a few seconds before he pushed Aaron back and grabbed his hand to pull him to the counter. Aaron sat down and waited for Spencer to settle a bowl of soup and a salad in front of him. It was like the Benihana in Dulles. Aaron started to dig in while Spencer poured Sake. As soon as he was seated, Spencer was eating as well.

"I would ask how you made all of this, but I've seen you using your fingers for things so I won't ask. Why this?"

"Two months ago on a case in backwoods Ohio, you commented that the sushi at the Kroger's was better than what we had got the night before at a buffet. Morgan was shocked that you were even trying the ones at Kroger after the abysmalness of the ones at the buffet, but you liked it. So I thought that something a little updated but traditional would be up your alley. I have spent a long time in Japan learning this art." Spencer picked up his chopsticks to eat the salad after setting down the spoon from the soup. Aaron hadn't been paying that close of attention to Spencer's food, but he had inhaled the soup. Aaron saw that a pretty big pan of it was made by the looks. Which was good because Jack loved the soup. It was probably going to be his breakfast if he came home that night. It was probably going to be Jack's preferred appetizer for all meals until it was gone. Aaron remembered a year before when Spencer had taken them to Benihana for Jack's birthday. Jack had
just got soup and salad. That was it. He didn't want rice, noodles, sushi, anything from the hibachi, just the soup, and the salad.

"This is good," Aaron said after he swallowed a bite of his food. Spencer was eating his salad slower, but Aaron knew that it was going to disappear before Aaron was done with his. He was right when a few minutes later Spencer got more salad. Aaron watched him eat it with his chopsticks. Aaron was using a fork for his. He wasn't all that shocked really, Spencer ate a lot of things with chopsticks. Jack was learning to eat a lot of things with chopsticks. Even if sometimes he had to cut things with a knife beforehand. That had been harrowing for Aaron, Spencer teaching Jack how to use a knife. Aaron had just closed his eyes thinking that Jack was too young, but he hadn't cut himself yet.

"Thank you." Spencer finished off the Sake in his cup and refilled it. Aaron noticed that it was the only drink that was on the table. It wasn't like it was going to do anything to them, but given how good it was, it wasn't cheap Sake but then what was cheap to Spencer? Aaron had seen his bank accounts. He knew how much money Spencer had. He knew how much he would have to spend daily to break Spencer and it was near impossible. Jack was given pretty everything, but he didn't whine for things. He knew that he got what he wanted if he was a good boy, but it wasn't all just he got what he wanted. Books were never questioned foods and snacks unless totally non-redeemable were never questioned. Toys were as he did have a limit of what fit in his toy chest so every few months Jack would go through and pick toys he didn't like to play with as much. They would find a family who had lost things in a fire, or if it was close to Christmas families that were down on their luck and gave them the toys, as well as some new ones. Learning toys and the like were rarely limited at all. Especially science related. Jack's playroom had areas for that as well.

Spencer brought out the cut sushi next and ladled some of the eel sauce from the pan where he had made it. Aaron was pretty damned sure that he wasn't going to like eel sauce from a lot of places anymore after he tried Spencer's. It was in a pan on the stove, but the sauce was cooled and solid, so that meant that it had to be a double boiler and the bottom was ice water. Aaron had seen Spencer do it for other sauces before that were best cooled. Aaron snagged the first slice and dipped it into the eel sauce. There was already the spicy mayo on top of the roll, so he didn't need more of that. That first taste of the eel sauce on his tongue had Aaron moaning in pleasure. The next slice he ate without anything other on it. Spencer was good at it. Given that Spencer seemed to have done it for a long while, Aaron wasn't shocked. Spencer started to tell the tale of how he had first got to Japan before the Humans had really spread across the island.

"I go back there a lot, or I used to before I became Spencer. I think that we need to go on a trip there with Jack when he's a little older. Of course, being FBI agents, we would have to declare, and just you know teleport of sorts there. Along big ley lines, I could do it. Japan is awash in Old God magic so I would recharge quickly there. I think that Jack will have fun."

"He has fun anywhere he goes as long as you go with him. You could make a boring day in meetings fun for him, Spencer."

Spencer blushed a little, and the redness stayed on his cheeks.

They slowly made their way through the rolls with Spencer cutting and topping the others as they got to them. There was mochi ice cream at the end, it had been made in the ice cream maker they had but chilled to harden up just a little more in the freezer while they ate. Then after that was Aaron showing Spencer how much he enjoyed their little at home date.

"This has been one of the better Valentine's I've had," Aaron said as he settled down on the bed after getting rid of the things he had used to clean them up. Spencer was on his front, his eyes wide
awake. They could talk for hours in bed, but Aaron knew they needed to get dressed. Jack would be home soon. Still, a few minutes in bed cuddling naked wasn't going to hurt.
From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

From the few Gods that have fully come out, Humans always ask them how they are able to hide. They see us after getting a scrape and that healing up very quickly. The thing is, we can suppress that. We used to do it on the battlefield. Have the medic dress the wound and then you are all done. You can walk away and rip the bandage off and just limp or make movements that show you are hurt and Humans won't question it. It's damned easy to make Humans believe a lot of things. Even death is easy to fake when one has been alive as long as I have. There are herbs that kill Humans that just put us into a short but very believing state of hibernation where not even our hearts beat. I could make anyone believe that I am dead. There is a reason that we only allow other Gods to work on us usually, while most of that reason is that Humans drugs really have no chance of doing anything for us, it's also that some Humans nature-based drugs can affect us in not good ways. None can kill us, we have not allowed those drugs to make it into circulation.

Some of the Gods who work in medicine have privileges at many hospitals. It's easy to get a notification to them to come and cover that place just to be safe. Sometimes all it takes is just seeing what's coming to make it understandable that pain is in the future.

May 2014

"Copy that any casualties?" Cruz asked over the phone. Aaron looked at Dave as they walked. It was Prentiss over the phone talking about what happened at the shoot out at the Mexican restaurant. Aaron hadn't liked it and had wanted to go with the team to take in the Preacher, but that hadn't happened.

"One. Coleman."

"Damn. Look I'm going to head to where you guys are. I know that you are keeping it down about some things, so I think having me to focus on will help a lot. I'll be there as soon as I can get a flight."

"And what about Reid?" Aaron asked. He hated calling him Reid in that instance, but they were in the station still with a lot of ears in the place that was listening to their every single word. Aaron knew that it would just take a single slip up. Spencer had called this area Godless, and it wasn't until Aaron had set foot there that he realized what he meant. There were no Gods around at all which was strange given that Aaron had felt Gods everywhere else they had gone. Aaron had learned that it wasn't that strange really. So they had come and not announced if they were Gods or not. Aaron wasn't sure if anyone had looked deeper into them to find out. Aaron had also made sure not to broadcast that he and Spencer were lovers. The team was doubling up. Dave and Morgan in one room, Aaron and Spencer in another, and JJ and Prentiss taking the last. There were a lot of issues in this place, and they had been sent to help, but also to figure out some things about police corruption that had come from Coleman himself. He had reached out to an old friend, only to find out that his friend was dead. Mateo Cruz's replacement had forwarded the information to the BAU.

"Not good. They're taking him to the hospital." Prentiss sounded a little distracted for a few seconds. "I'll call you back."

"Let's go," Dave said after Aaron hung up the phone.
Aaron didn’t fight Dave on the driving at all. He was supposed to play up the worried boss, the upset person. He knew that no one would look too close if he were playing worried.

Sitting and waiting was not Aaron’s strongest suit so when he got to the hospital, he went to talk with Morgan while JJ and Prentiss stayed in Spencer's waiting room area. The doctor had given no estimate on Spencer's surgery, so it was just a waiting game.

Cruz and Garcia arrived just a little over two hours later. Aaron quirked an eyebrow at him.

"I have a friend who got us a flight on a Citation X. It's not fully out of the testing phase yet, but it was better than waiting another hour," Cruz said. "How is Reid?"


Morgan started to move on the bed like he was going to get up.

"NO!" Garcia said, and she started to reach out to shove him back down, but she stopped. "What are you doing?"

"You can get your ass I'm not going to just sit around here. Guys, come on, get me out of here."

"Actually you are, just hang on a second. Just until we figure out what's what. Catch me up."

As soon as Aaron saw the bullets that were on Coleman's vest, he knew that it wasn't going to be anywhere near simple.

"So, how are you feeling?" Aaron asked over the phone. He looked around the station house and sighed in relief as there were no eyes on him. That didn't mean there were not ears though.

"I'm good, Mal did really good."

"Mal is there?" Aaron asked.

"As soon as I knew I was going here, I made sure that he got someone here. He has privileges at a lot of hospitals. He doesn't have it here, but he has privileges with a reciprocating hospital. So he went there, and when the call came for a surgeon for necks, he came to help. They don't know that he's a God and he's made sure that I'm given drugs that won't do shit to me. I'm in pain, but I'm fine. He slipped me the needed medication to make sure I don't get an infection while I was in surgery."

Spencer did sound tired, like when he needed to recharge but hadn't been able to and would actually go to sleep.

Aaron started to walk outside and hoped that no one followed him. He needed to tell Spencer what to expect given how the Sheriff that Coleman replaced had died. Aaron wasn't going to take chances. He didn't want Spencer hurt at all. "Morgan is on his way to you."

"Oh yay, I get the big bad protector huh? Is that why someone pulled the fire alarm, and I was taken out of the hospital for a few minutes?"

"Garcia's not exactly equipped to protect you but yes. When she was leaving to help us, she pulled the fire alarm." Aaron looked around the outside and saw that there was no one. He opened up the SUV and got inside before shutting the door and locking it. The SUV was bullet resistant, and since Aaron was alone, it was the best place for him. "The last Sheriff before Coleman died of a medication issue. Allergic reaction. It wasn't listed on his file."
"Oh, so I should expect someone to come in and give me something with beta-lactams in it like my file says I have an allergic reaction to?" Spencer asked.

"Why would it say that?" Aaron asked.

"Because Mal always adds that to my file if I'm hurt and shit. So we shall see," Spencer inhaled sharply. "Oh, hello. What is that?"

Aaron heard someone saying something. Male but that was the only thing that he could tell over the phone.

"I had my meds an hour ago."

"Yes, this is post-op antibiotics," the voice said much clearer.

"Yes, I had those too. Hey, what are you...That's Carbenicillin. I can't have that I have a severe reaction to beta-lactams."

"That's not in your file."

Aaron heard noises that sounded like Spencer trying to grab something. Then there was a sound like a pained noise. Then there was the sound of a body hitting the floor.

"Well, he's out cold, and he injected the beta-lactams into my IV. So we can get him on attempted murder."

"What did you do?" Aaron asked.

"I punched him. Oh look, there is Morgan. Goodbye Aaron. I'll see you soon."

Aaron wanted to scream at Spencer for hanging up but he couldn't. So he just slipped his phone into his pocket. McGregor had made a second move, and it hadn't killed Spencer. So that meant that Spencer saw something. If there was any chance that Spencer saw him leaving the scene after the shoot out, Aaron could see him trying to kill him. Aaron texted Morgan to not leave Spencer alone, no matter what. Morgan responded with a picture of the man who had attempted to kill Spencer by injecting him. The face was not familiar. Aaron was going to make sure that the man stayed in Federal Custody.

"Agent Hotchner?" A voice asked, and Aaron looked out to see that it was a man who was dressed in normal clothes. The man looked around and then raised up a Texas Rangers badge. Aaron nodded toward the passenger seat. The man walked around the SUV and waited for Aaron to unlock the door before he tried it. "You are Agent Hotchner yes?"

"Yes."

"Good. I'm Ted McClure from the Texas Rangers. Doctor Reid and Doctor Sheets sent me. I'm an undercover specialist for the Rangers, and I've been here for a while. I've heard your agents have Dinah's kid in protective custody."

"Yes, we do, and we have her as well. They are on their way to a safe house."

"Good. I knew something was wrong here but never able to get a good look at what. The cops here are damned good."

"Well, we have enough for the Rangers to come in. Especially considering someone just tried to kill
one of my agents."

"Good. I want to work with you for the rest of this if you don't mind. I can break my cover easy. I have everything hidden in my apartment."

"Good. I can drive you there, and we can start to unravel this the rest of the way."

Aaron looked at Spencer who was asleep on the jet. He was fully asleep, stopping his healing had made it so that he had to heal up a little closer to Human than a God. Though Aaron was happy that his color was coming back. Cruz sat down in the seat across from him. JJ was in the seat next to him, she was curled up and asleep. Morgan and Garcia were sitting across from each other at the two-person table and Dave was alone elsewhere. Prentiss was in the seat beside Cruz.

"So full jet," Cruz said.

"Yeah. I keep hoping that one year the Brass will understand our want for a bigger jet. Maybe this year with the cases will be enough."

"Let me know how that goes," Dave said with a smile on his face.

The door to the bathroom opened and Apollo stepped out of the bathroom. He looked down at Spencer and gave a fond smile before sitting down on the arm of the couch. He reached down and ruffled Spencer's hair. Spencer smiled and started to sit up. Aaron nearly shot forward to push him down but Apollo slipped down and settled to where he was supporting Spencer's upper back, and neck on his lip and Spencer's head was pillowed on the pillow covered arm. Aaron hadn't even seen Apollo set the pillow there. Apollo's hand went right for the bandage over Spencer's neck.

"You need to stop doing that kind of shit," Apollo said.

"Better me hurt like this than a dead Prentiss," Spencer said. He yawned and grimaced.

"Is that what you saw?"

"As soon as that bullet loaded in the chamber? Yes."

"Why did McGregor have a death wish on you?" Dave asked.

"Because I saw him. When I was half in an out from the shot, I saw him walking in civilian clothes. He probably figured that I would remember. He had to know enough to know I was a genius. It just makes sense."

"He wanted all loose ends taken care of just in case he was able to get out of this alive," Dave said.

"Yes. The Rangers said they had dealt with this before. The money is a big incentive, it corrupts," Cruz said. He turned to look from Aaron to Apollo. While the God had been slick with the rest of the team on saying he was a friend of Spencer's and had come when it was time to help him, Cruz hadn't entirely bought that.

"Keep looking at me like that Section Chief Cruz, and I'll take it as a challenge to get you in that bathroom and on your knees," Apollo said.

"LO!" Spencer said, and his eyes shot out. Only Apollo's hand on Spencer's neck stopped him from moving.

"If you pop those stitches I'll have Ar spank your ass," Apollo said.
Morgan was laughing, and it took only a few seconds for the others to chime in. Cruz was looking at Apollo with a strange look. This wasn't precisely what Aaron had in mind for this trip home, but the laughter was good. Fellow law enforcement officers who turned bad weighed down on all of them.

"I thought your name was Malcolm Sheets? Where does low come from?" Cruz asked.

"I would say that it's a fond nickname, but as Spencer here is one of my favorite Gods, it's for my true name which if one has access to for Malcolm Sheets would know that I'm Apollo."

"Shit," Morgan said. He walked up to where he was standing behind Cruz. "Like Apollo and Artemis, Apollo?"

"Yes. Speaking of Artemis, she wants me to tell you that she's distraught that you got shot," Apollo said with a grin on his face.

"Not a child, don't need her mothering."

"She's not exactly the mothering type," Dave said.

Aaron could see that they were all holding back on what they wanted to say because Cruz was there. Aaron looked at Spencer to see that he was looking at Cruz. Aaron looked at Cruz as well to see the calculating look on his face.

"You know there were a few rumors after your takedown of Gideon, Reid that you were just playing at being a New God. I never paid much attention to any of it but now with this...with knowing Apollo. Are you a New God?"

"No. I am not a New God. Would you like to know who I am?" Spencer opened his eyes all the way, done playing a wounded victim. There was still some blood on the bandage on his neck, but he had ripped the stitches a little before they had got on the jet. Apollo had put in some new ones, rapid-dissolving that would be gone by the time that Spencer didn't need them anymore.

"Who knows?" Cruz looked at the ones he could see the faces of, and even Aaron did. No one looked surprised which really unless they wanted to play it up there was no reason. Cruz looked at Aaron. "How long have you known?"

"Since Foyet confronted him about it when he was in my apartment to kill me. Foyet figured it out. He had a few choice crass words on what he thought was Spencer's God power, but really he was rather stupid when it came to that. No one looks at Spencer and thinks that he's the God of taking it up the ass."

"Foyet figured it out by what watching him?"

"I would assume. I've figured out that he's not that terribly low key on his comings and goings as a God and it would have been easy for anyone who was going to watch him to figure out that he wasn't a New God. The FBI could have figured it out very easy as well. I still don't really understand how Gideon never did. He never turned off the profiling thing. Ever. Still, would you care to take a guess on who he is? Do you want to know?"

"Does the God branch know?"

"The head," Spencer answered. He swallowed and reached up to scratch at the bandage and Apollo slapped his hand away. His fingers started to rub around the edges like he was soothing it.

"Given you act like a child to Apollo you can't be older than him," Cruz said.
The laugh that Apollo let out was genuinely startling. It was interesting to see the look on Cruz's face.

"Shit," Cruz said. He looked at Spencer with a new look on his face. "God of Psychology could be easy to hide if you were any number of Gods. Though given your touted abilities, God of Knowledge really fits. You are a bold bastard, aren't you? Publishing those journals while sitting inside of the FBI. Damn."

"You followed that line pretty quick," Dave said.

"I did a lot of research into this team, into the people you all were before you became FBI agents. The accident that took Diana Reid's life was horrible. No one has ever been able to say how Spencer survived it, even him becoming a God in that instant. He was uninjured. He was covered in his mother's blood. I always chalked that up to the God thing, and no one really understands enough of it but..."

"He died, and I buried him personally with his mother. I bought a two person grave for her, and while the official paperwork says that the second spot is empty, it's not but the man who maintains the graveyard knows that. He's met with a lot of Gods and has a few spots that have empty spots where bodies should be, and he's well paid to keep his silence on the affairs of Gods. The body of Spencer Reid is the only body that is where it shouldn't be. He's never buried another body there without documenting it. Just lying about the body count of what is in the graveyard. Spencer Reid did not survive it. I got into the middle of the wreck and held him while he died. He wanted me to protect his mom, to make sure that she was taken care of. I promised him even though I knew that she was already dead. He didn't need that. So I had a few of my creatures in that area take the body away, and I used a massive amount of power to change who I was. The looks and the body size just enough. The Gods in the area, as well as the Humans, thought that it was Spencer's turning into a New God that caused the power surge that was felt. I just made sure that no one ever questioned things too hard. It's easy to fake being scared and grief-ridden after seeing Humans do it for so long."

"And what was your goal in joining the FBI?"

"Gideon talked me into it. I had planned on joining an old friend in a business of his with my science degrees, but Gideon painted a very nice world for me. In my travels around the world, I've taken on more than God of Knowledge. With knowledge comes power and the ability to know and to be able to pass judgment on people. I had watched the BAU and formerly BSU from a distance over the years. So I thought a few years as a new God with them and then moving on would be a good idea, then I met Aaron. I stayed because of him."

"Yes, I was told not to touch your relationship with a ten-foot pole. I just...No wonder. You know I thought that I had everything that I needed to run this team right, but then everything that you think of is run through Hotch isn't it?"

"Yes," Aaron said.

"You know when I took this everyone said I was insane with two New Gods on the team and issues of the team being way too close, but it made you the team that you were. I was reminded time and again to not mess with the dynamics. I think that it was the best advice I could have been given. Is there paperwork I need to fill out that protects me?"

"If you tell, I kill you. That's pretty much it," Spencer said.

Aaron couldn't tell if Spencer was lying or not. It was evident that Cruz believed him. He nodded his head once and then looked at Aaron.
"Once we land, your team only has to come in tomorrow to take care of finalizing the paperwork for the Rangers and the Brass, you can take a few days. Apollo put Reid down on medical leave for a week of leave before he's returned to mostly an active duty. So the team can stay on desk duty after a few days off until Reid's back. I would like the team to talk to one of the psychologists on staff for an informal meeting. Clear the air as it were and get things smoothed over. I know that Reid's preferred one is on vacation so his can wait until she gets back."

"Oh, I prefer her because she's smart like me. I don't have to talk rings around her, she understands me. I can talk to the others. They have gotten better at talking to me and not labeling me sociopathic."

"What?" Morgan asked.

"It's in Spencer's file. After the Bale bombing, he talked to several. All came back like that until Doctor Quinn talked to him." Aaron leaned back in his seat and relaxed. "He was almost put onto leave until his head as straightened out according to Strauss. Though I was the one that had Doctor Quinn talk to him. He was very open with her because he understands his leaps in logic. She understands geniuses because she is one. So she talked to him and put him as fine. The bureau covered their asses and had him talk to three more with high IQs, and then he was deemed ready to go back on the team."

"The problem was that the evisceration of Gideon's career that I did was seen as something dangerous because he was my mentor. Aaron was the closest thing I had to a mentor. Gideon was the man who got me in, but he stopped being anything else when he cared nothing for teaching me anything that I needed to know to be an FBI agent."

Aaron snorted at that. Spencer reached across the distance between them and swatted at him. Only the tips of his fingers brushed over Aaron's knee.

"What?" Morgan asked.

"He was a CIA agent at one point. Instead of allowing his death to be faked by an explosion, he helped get people out of the building after then just disappeared. He knew everything he needed to be an FBI agent before even went to Caltech to assume the life of Spencer Reid." Aaron realized that Spencer had disliked Gideon from almost the moment that Gideon had just dropped him onto the team with nothing.

"Okay, while Spencer is a God he does need rest. He doesn't sleep but when he's injured, he will. Let him sleep. Hotch swap with me. You will calm him down more." Apollo carefully stood up, supporting Spencer's body until Aaron got under him. Aaron raked his fingers through Spencer's hair. Spencer's eyes closed and his body went limp in seconds.

"Okay, that's..." Morgan was looking at Spencer in shock.

"God bodies know what they need. Go who wants to play poker? Spencer has said something about playing for snacks?" Apollo asked.

Aaron laughed, but he held up his hand. He could play from where he was. They had done it before. Garcia settled in on the floor, handing cards to and from the table for Aaron while she played as well. Their laughter didn't wake up Spencer, and the movement didn't either. Not until the jet landed. Aaron was looking forward to getting Spencer in bed and cuddling into him. Aaron wasn't sure how close to losing Spencer he could have got, but he didn't want to dwell on that. He wanted to think about the next few days pampering Spencer and then the future that was spread out in front of them.
Chapter 35

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

I cannot explain everything in the world. It takes ages for me to sift through the information in my head. I know every single written word, whether it's written by hand, by a keystroke, whether it's printed. I can flip through the information in a book by touching it. Computers are not the same, no matter how much I wish it. If I want to know the depraved things that humans have done to victims, I need to actually sort through my memory, which takes a really long time. Sometimes it's easier just to read through the information on the screen than it is to search.

There are cases that even I can't wrap up in a bow. I'm not a Superhero who gets just what is needed to finish things off in the way of last minute help. I still have to do the work. Few cases have ever really stuck with me since I had joined the BAU. Some cases did for a few days, the effects of what Human had done to each other.

One case has stuck out in my mind as the one that I was not able to let go. That I wasn't able to just step back from. Nothing fit together in my mind, so I had to work it until it was done. My lover tried to get me to let it go, but that wasn't going to happen. There was something wrong, and there was something that we were missing, and I couldn't see it. There are those who would call an inability to let something go a fault. I've been alive long enough to know when to let go and when not to. I'm just so damned glad that I didn't let go.

October 2014

Aaron frowned as Spencer spent another afternoon in the office. They had a week off of work and today was Thursday, they were back to work in just over three days, yet Spencer was in there every hour between lunch and dinner. Aaron tried to ask what he was doing but Spencer never let him see what he was doing, or he would distract Aaron with something else.

There were cases that just never seemed to be let go until they were figured out and Aaron knew that whatever Spencer was doing he was working on the Bakersfield case. Aaron agreed that there was more going on, but Aaron didn't know how to figure out precisely what that was.

Aaron looked at the clock. It was just after one. Aaron would need to leave soon to go and pick up Jack. Spencer had been not going with him to pick up Jack, but he did spend all of the evenings with them. Aaron kind of marveled at Spencer's ability to just shut down what he was thinking about and never seem like he was anywhere except for where he was. Aaron was pretty sure that was part of why Aaron had fallen for him head over heels.

It had taken a long time to narrow down the point in time where Aaron knew he was in love with Spencer, but he hadn't done a damned thing about it because for Aaron having any part of Spencer was better than having nothing of him at all. The world had narrowed for Aaron but also got bigger the night that Foyet had attacked him. Aaron had got everything that he wanted but realized that while he thought he knew exactly what the world was, he didn't actually. The world was much more vast.

"Aaron!" Spencer yelled.

"Yes?" Aaron started for the office and found that Spencer had no locked the door like he had the past two days. Aaron opened it and found that Spencer had papers everywhere. Aaron saw that
many were missing person pictures. There were a few others as well.

"I have been in contact with Andi Swann's team."

"What have you been doing?" Aaron wondered at what all of the papers were that were scattered all over with strings connecting them. He had seen it on cases before, but he never took up this much space. He wondered what exactly Spencer was working on until he saw one single image.

"The Bakersfield case. There was a lot that didn't sit with me about it, and so I have kept on looking. There are a lot of things that are at my disposal that are not exactly legal. No one can track me. This laptop was made by Jax, and he would never allow me to get caught."

"Why the Domestic Trafficking Task Force?" Aaron tried to connect that because the trafficking in the last case had not been enough to actually read in the task force.

"Because I think they are the only ones who can deal with this."

"Why?" Aaron walked around to stand behind Spencer. The screen had the email program for the FBI on it. Aaron wasn't shocked that it was loaded to the laptop. Aaron figured that there was little when it came to computers that Spencer couldn't do. Aaron wondered why Garcia had never figured out that his playing a technophobe was just to not step on her toes. Aaron remembered that none of the issues started up until she had joined the team. While it was easier for Spencer to read on paper, he could use a tablet he just didn't like to.

"This is bigger than us, and they are looking at us now that we have pushed in on their money making in Bakersfield. I monitored their parts of the dark web since the case had closed. I didn't do much until this." Spencer tapped a few keys instead of the mouse and screen of images came up. Aaron bristled as he realized that it was the day they had gone out to play soccer with Jack after they had got back from Bakersfield. There was also a picture of Henry and Henry was playing at the park with Spencer that was from the morning before. Spencer had taken him to the park before taking him to school as JJ was dealing with a case for another team that needed a little bit of her touch on the media. She was working from home, but it was still enough that between that and Will working, JJ had called to see if Spencer would take Henry to school. The dates on the images didn't match the upload dates. The upload dates matched when Spencer started to block himself off into the office.

"Jack's been targeted, and you didn't tell me?" Aaron asked. Aaron's blood was rushing through his body. He felt like he was being targeted by Foyet again. He felt like the moment he had realized that he was not alone in the apartment.

"He's one of seventeen kids from the BAU teams, as well as the IRT that was being targeted. I have been watching their chatter. You would do something stupid if you knew, but they messed up with Henry's picture because I spotted them when they took it. I was able to make a sketch of the husband and wife, or two people acting like a husband and a wife, and sent that to Garcia. She's identified them and did a few things that were a little illegal, but she's not going to get caught. There is a huge effort across the country to unravel their web, and we will get it all figured out. Jack's not in danger, he never was, they were watching him to figure out who of the kids would be the easiest to take. I think that I would have loved to have seen them try and take any of Garrett's kids. Even the ones that are kids are not ones that I would want to tussle with. He's trained them to protect themselves."

Aaron looked at the screen and the images of his son. He wanted to be pissed. He understood though what Spencer meant. Doing anything that acted like they were protecting Jack more would have meant that they would have been tipped off. They had been watching just long enough it seemed that they would know their routine. Aaron felt gutted though because if Spencer had dropped the case like Aaron told him to, this never would have become an issue until Jack was taken or had been
almost taken. Aaron laid his hand on Spencer's shoulder, and he squeezed it.

"Have Andi let me know all updates."

"I already told her to just before you walked into the room. I was leaving it up to you if the rest of the team was going to be read into it."

"Not yet, only when it's all done. I have no clue if anyone else is looking into it as well."

"Garcia says no and she wasn't lying. I've learned how she lies when she does. It's pretty simple." Spencer looked at the clock in the corner of his laptop screen. Aaron looked as well. "We have enough time to do the shopping that I want to do if we take the cooler and get some dry ice for it and then we can go and get Jack."

"That sounds good." Aaron wasn't that shocked that Spencer wanted to go with him to get Jack.

"I had Cruz ask me the other day about Jack. How he handles having me in his life. It got me thinking about it all and really I don't feel any different about him than I did other kids I've taken in over the years and raised as my own until they were old enough to go about their life. You and I didn't have too many instances of kids when you were alive the first time. I just never thought much about the fact that Jack still calls me Spencer but then I've not asked him to call me anything different."

"He's good at picking that stuff up," Aaron said. He pressed a kiss into the top of Spencer's head. He looked to see that Spencer hadn't even changed out of the sleep clothes he had put no the night before. It had been a movie night with Jack, so they had eaten dinner in their pajamas and then watched two movies with Jack falling asleep halfway through the second. Dinner had been light because movies were watched with popcorn and candy. While Aaron and Spencer didn't need to watch that, Jack did, and he didn't need to get too many sweets into his system. He had still slept like a baby after that though.

"You'll have to get dressed, Love, if you want to go with me to get Jack."

Spencer looked down at his pants and laughed. The pair of pajamas he was wearing was a pair that Jack had got for him as a quick present after helping him with a new science experiment. Jack always had money and Aaron had no clue how and Spencer was good at distraction when he wanted to be. Aaron was pretty damned sure that Spencer kept cash on hand in his wallet for Jack to take when he wanted something. The only things that Jack had ever magically had money for was gifts for other people. Aaron, Jessica, Spencer, and even Henry. Though there was the one time that Jack had found a set of a dozen roses that were infused with God magic and they never wilted. He had got those for Hubert. Hubert had been very happy and only ate a single petal a day.

"Yeah, I should get dressed. No one wants to see me with purple lipstick lips all over my legs."

Aaron kind of liked the pants and the matching purple T-shirt that was the same color of purple as the lipstick on the lips on the pants. Spencer stood up, closing out of the email with a few keystrokes and then shut down the computer as he got to the apex of his standing. Aaron knew the password to get on the computer even though he had no clue what the numbers meant, he knew that it was something personal.

Spencer left the room with a quick kiss to Aaron's cheek. Aaron watched him as he took the left set of spiral stairs that led to the second floor, which was odd. Aaron realized that Spencer almost always took the left set of stairs. Even when he was standing next to the right ones or they had just come inside, and the right side ones were a lot closer. Neither set really mattered once one was
upstairs if Spencer was going to their bedroom as the doorway was half between, but Jack's rooms were on the left side while the guest rooms were on the right. Aaron wondered if it had something to do with that.

Aaron walked to the safe in the office and opened it up. He found the holster as well as his backup piece. He didn't use it that much outside of work, but he wanted to be safe while they were out. He didn't want Spencer to have to smite anyone. There was no one around to blame for the smiting this time. Aaron would rather keep what Spencer was from the whole of the world. Aaron was possessive of Spencer, and he didn't want to share him with the world.

Spencer did telephone interviews that were routed through Grimes Tech servers that didn't allow for hacking at all. Instead, it just kept bouncing from point to point over the world. The last time that Aaron had been at the apartment for the interview, he had got hard just from listening to Spencer talking with what he called his Egyptian accent. He bounced between it and his Roman accent. None of them fit what today's version of those accents was. Aaron assumed that the accents were closer to what they were back when those areas at been at the height of their power. It kept the people who liked his books from even getting close to finding him. He also knew in things that made it seem like he wasn't anywhere near where he was. The last time it had been evening, and he talked about just waking up.

Aaron was just finishing putting the gun on his ankle when Spencer appeared in the office. Aaron knew that he had got lost in his head, but he hadn't realized that it had been that long. Spencer was dressed in a suit, not one of his flashy ones but a comfortable one. Aaron wondered for a few seconds until he noticed that Spencer was not wearing his regular belt. His regular belt was leather and a very light brown from wear and tear over the years. This one was black and new, very new and Aaron knew what one it was. Aaron dropped his foot off of the desk, Aaron had been dressed for the day, and after taking the trash out, he had never taken his sneakers off. He stepped up to Spencer and wrapped an arm around his waist, finding not just his revolver there but that knife as well. Aaron had thought much about the knife in a while. They each had a safe for their weapons in the bedroom, and Aaron hadn't got into Spencer's since it had been set up after the remodel. While they both had a backup gun in the safe in the office, the rest of the weapons were in the bedroom.

"You think that this is what the knife was given to you for?"

"No, but I like having knives on me when I'm going to war, and there are no doubts on this. They declared war on us."

"Us?"

"The BAU," Spencer said.

Aaron frowned looking at the rear view mirror. Jack was in the middle of the backseat with his backpack in his lap, and his arms wrapped it. Spencer had been asked to have Jessica meet at the apartment as soon as Jack had got into the car. Jack had asked for a quiet time on the way home. Quiet time was something that any of them could ask for. Until the person who asked for it said it was over, they were not allowed to ask questions. It had started when Spencer wanted time in his library without someone bugging him since they had remodeled the apartment. Jack used it on days when he didn't feel like talking, Aaron hadn't done it once yet.

The only issue is that Aaron knew something was wrong with Jack. Something that had Spencer texting the Headmistress of New Haven. At a long stoplight close to the apartment, Spencer handed over his phone. The Headmistress knew of nothing that happened during school but that they had checked over the footage of the playground where kids played until their parents came and picked
them up and she saw a group of three kids talking to Jack. She was not sure what happened but that after Jack seemed deflated. Aaron looked at Spencer as he turned onto the street that their apartment was on. He saw Jessica pulling into the apartment building parking lot.

Aaron followed behind her, parking in his usual spot. He got out of the car and opened up Jack's door for the boy to slide out the car, and he didn't look up at Aaron, he didn't say hi to Jessica or look at Spencer. He trudged up the stairs and used his key to unlock the door and turned off the alarm.

Jack dropped his backpack by the desk that was by the library and then he turned around to look at Aaron, Spencer, and Jessica.

"How about you sit and think about what you want to ask while I make some tea. How does something white sound?"

"That White Chai you picked up from Petal would be lovely," Aaron said in response to Spencer's question.

"Yes, please," Jack said. Jack picked the chair that was alone to sit in. It was Spencer's thinking chair. It was where Spencer went when he was writing on his book, and he didn't want to be in the office or the library. Jack tucked his feet up onto the chair, his shoes were gone, Aaron hadn't even seen him take them off.

Jessica followed Spencer into the kitchen and Aaron moved closer while keeping an eye on Jack.

"That's Haley's upset face. It's so strange to see her in him. There is nothing else of her in him. He has mannerisms of you Spencer, of Aaron. But that look on his face right there is something that is so very Haley. I just never thought I would see it on him."

"There is a lot that is genetics, the way that skin lays on muscle and bone, how bodies move. He has other things that are Haley. You just don't see them because you see them coming from you because you didn't see them a lot until after you had spent time with him." Spencer looked up at Jessica as he dropped the end of the thermometer into the pan of water on the stove. It was supposed to be used in an oven, but Spencer had adapted it to use in water for tea. Spencer made each tea to the specification of what each of the leaves used actually called for. It was kind of funny to Aaron, but then Aaron knew that he had lived in what amounted to tea country. That had been in his last book the one hundred years that he spent in one of the most productive tea leaf areas of the Eastern World at the time. He had learned the perfect way to brew each one, and what each water looked like when it was ready. He usually didn't even use the thermometer, he watched the water, but Aaron assumed that it meant that he was planning on talking to them.

"You know I sometimes forget the breadth of knowledge that you have," Jessica said.

"I've been there for all of it. The finding of what we call DNA, the seeing what makes bodies different."

"The splitting of the atom," Aaron said.

Spencer looked at Aaron, and it was a look that said he knew exactly what Aaron was doing and he wasn't sure that he liked it. Aaron didn't want Jessica to ever forget that while Spencer seemed all nice and gentle, he had watched Humanity do unspeakable things and didn't stop them. Aaron knew that knowledge was neutral.

"Killed a man to stop him from killing his son or his wife," Spencer said.

Aaron didn't understand what that meant until he remembered Spencer telling him in the desert about
the man he had killed while he was in the hospital. Aaron hadn't thought about his father in years, so it had never crossed his mind. Aaron saw the raised eyebrow and knew that Spencer was waiting for him to say something. He shook his head.

"Knowledge is neither good nor evil and how it's used doesn't matter. It can be used in so many ways, and none of them are black and white. There is nothing in my life that is simple, from the people that I end up helping to the people that I kill. There is no want for personal gain. Jack looks upset but not at something we did. He looks like he lacks knowledge. He's upset at something he doesn't know."

"It has to do with Haley doesn't it?" Jessica asked.

"I would put the percentage at ninety-five. The other five is that he wants to know about sex."

"Sex?" Jessica and Aaron asked.

"He goes to a boarding school, there are some kids who are boarded there, but it's the same basic thing. There are a lot of kids who are older than him, and he is going to hear a lot of things. But sex is low because I don't think that he would act like this for a sex talk."

"I don't think so," Aaron said, agreeing with Spencer but he could see Jack acting like he was if it was something troubling about sex. New Haven had a good security system and made sure that everyone who worked there from the janitors that only worked at night to the groundskeepers didn't hurt the kids. Aaron had a feeling that a government agency was the one to do the backgrounds checks there because there were a lot of prestigious kids who went there.

Spencer focused on the tea and added the leaves to the pot in the mesh bag that he used. Aaron watched him go through the motions of preparing the cups with the correct amount of sugar and milk for each person as the tea itself steeped. Aaron loved watching him work when he was focused on tea. It was kind of enthralling to watch him work on anything really, but he was so smooth at the tea making. Aaron had watched him make matcha latte one morning when he hadn't been able to rest like he usually did. Spencer had been hesitant and almost shaky right up until he started to whisk the tea. That morning had also answered a question that Aaron had about the weird looking bamboo whisk thing he had seen in the kitchen cabinet. It hung there and was where no one would break it. Spencer had been steady as a rock when he had been whisking and then mixing the hot milk into the matcha. Aaron had taken a sip, but it just wasn't the drink for him.

"I'm ready," Jack called out as Spencer was pouring the tea into the cups. Aaron took his and Jack's before he gave Jessica a grim nod. Aaron walked out into the living room to see that Jack had slipped up the stairs without him knowing. He had a huge stuffed animal, well huge as in it was half of Jack's body size. It was a dragon that Jin had given him, it was a perfect replica of Stormy. Jack liked to squeeze it while watching movies that he thought were scary as Stormy did not like to be squeezed like that. Aaron set down Jack's tea before taking a seat across from Jack on the couch. Jessica took the seat beside him while Spencer sat on the floor at Aaron's feet.

"What do you want to talk about?" Aaron asked.

Jack looked every bit his nine years young at that point. Aaron still marveled that he was that old. Aaron vividly remembered the day that he was born. The day that the doctor had settled him into Aaron's hands.

"There were some kids at school today who was talking about a woman named Haley Brooks. I asked them about her. I know that Brooks is a very common last name, but it's my mother's name. They were talking about how horrible she was and that they were glad that their mother wasn't like
“That is her?”

“What did they say that she did?”

“That she got rid of a lot of babies in her stomach and she was horrible.”

Spencer held out his arms, and Jack easily slid out of the chair and ran to Spencer before doing what amounted to just falling on him.

“I knew it,” Jack said.

“I stopped her from ever being able to hurt you or your father again. I thought I was going to lose my best friend that night, but I couldn’t go on with the knowledge that I had in my head. Your birth mother was not a good person, but that doesn’t mean anything about what you are going to be Jack. Look at your Aunt. She’s perfectly fine, and she loves you.” Spencer inhaled enough that Aaron watched as Jack raised up on Spencer before settling down again when Spencer exhaled. Spencer turned his head to Aaron, and there was an apology in his eyes. “Just because a parent is bad doesn’t mean a single thing about how you are going to be. Look at your father. He’s one of the best father’s out there isn’t he?”

“Yeah.” Jack turned his head to look at Aaron and Aaron scooted forward on the couch and then got down on the floor with Jack and Spencer. Aaron laid a hand on Jack’s back and started to rub on it.

“His father was a very bad person. Do you remember you saw that woman hit a man the other day because he wouldn’t do what she wanted? We talked about what physical abuse and mental abuse were.”

“I remember. That was scary.”

“Yes, I am sure that it was for you. Your father endured both at the hands of his father. He made a promise to you when you were born that he would never do that to you. That you would never fear him like he feared his father. You are going to be a wonderful father if you ever choose to have kids. You are going to love them and make sure that they have the best life because you learned from one of the best men in the world on how to do that.”

“Two,” Jack said, and he shoved himself up to where he was sitting on Spencer’s thighs. There were a few tears in evidence on his face.

“Two what?” Spencer asked. He looked very confused.

“I am learning from two of the best men.” Jack looked at Aaron for only a second before he looked back at Spencer. “Sara in my class has two moms. No one makes fun of her, but she was scared when she came to school on the first day. I didn’t think about it then but now. I have two Dads, and I have since before you and Dad got together.”

“I’m not-” Spencer stopped, and he swallowed. He wrapped his arms around Jack bringing him close for a hug that lasted a lot longer than the usual hugs that he gave to Jack.

“You are,” Jack whispered vehemently.

“Yeah, I guess I am. I guess I just always saw myself as your uncle of sorts. You don’t call me Uncle like the others, but that’s not exactly meaning anything. Pen was one of your first words. I guess I shouldn’t be shocked, but I am.” Spencer pulled Jack back into his arms and held him tight. “I love you, dear sweet boy. I would destroy the world for you if you asked it of me.”
"You would be bored if you killed everyone in the world. Then who would you chase?" Jack laughed a little as he said it, but he went limp in Spencer's arms. His hands fisted into the sleeves of his shirt. "Tell me everything, please."

Spencer looked at Aaron and Aaron nodded his head.

"Jack, I think I'm going to let Spencer tell you."

"Papa," Jack said.

"I'm going to let your Papa tell you." Aaron looked at Jessica, and she looked like she was on the verge of tears. Aaron felt pretty damned close himself. Aaron pulled on her arm, she didn't resist the tug down onto the floor. Instead, she just went willingly and cuddled into Aaron's side. Spencer could tell the whole story best because he had less emotion in it all. Aaron couldn't tell the story without getting pissed off, and Jack didn't need to see that.

"Okay." Jack turned his head to where he was looking at Aaron. Spencer started to tell everything to Jack that Aaron still wasn't exactly sure that he was old enough to know. He and Spencer had talked, and if Jack was asking about something, then he should be told from them because if not he was going to ask someone else and then they would have no control over what he was being told.

Aaron knew that it was going to be a bad night. Jack would probably be upset, Jessica would, Aaron was probably going to have anger simmering under his skin, and Spencer was just going to be distant. It's how he processed, and right now he had a lot to process.
Chapter 36

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Death can be a blessing. If one is old and worn out and unable to enjoy life anyone. If one is sick and will never get better. If one is in pain that will never go away. Death is a blessing in all of those. I've helped those who will never get better have dignity in life. One should always have dignity. If it's something else that is beyond your control taking it from you. Though that just could be the thoughts of a long-lived God.

What are your thoughts on death being a blessing?

January 2015

Aaron looked at the time on the clock on the wall as his personal cell phone went off. It was eleven at night. If it were Jessica, she would call the house phone. If it were anyone that wasn't important, they would not be calling at this hour of the night.

"If that's a telemarketer," Spencer said as he stepped out of the library. He leaned against the wall there and watched as Aaron leaned forward to grab his phone.

"Hotchner," Aaron said as he laid the phone against his ear after answering it.

"Aaron Hotchner?" a voice asked on the other end of the phone. Aaron knew two things right off the bat, there was something wrong, and this was a cop calling him. Aaron stood up, setting his book down on the coffee table he waved at the door. Spencer nodded.

"Yes, this is Aaron Hotchner."

"Yes, Mister Hotchner, my name is Officer Cleveland Miller."

Aaron pushed the voice out as the officer told where he worked out of because Aaron knew him. Well, Aaron knew of him.

"I was called out to Jason Gideon's cabin on a call of shots fired. We have a body, and we would like you to come by and identify him please."

"Why was his son not called?"

"The records that we have on Mister Gideon have you as his next of kin."

"Really?" Aaron asked. He looked at Spencer again and frowned, Spencer frowned back. He had his cellphone in his hand. Aaron wondered who he was texting. Aaron got up off the couch and moved to the stairs to head up and get dressed. If that was Jason Gideon at the cabin, dead, it was going to be a BAU case. If it wasn't then Aaron wanted to be the one to find Gideon.

"Yes. How did you know Jason Gideon?"

"We used to work together, but it did not end on good terms. I am shocked I'm still listed as his next of kin."

"How quick can you be here?"
"Depending on finding someone to come and stay with my son, at least an hour."

"We will be here; we are collecting evidence. If this is Jason Gideon, are you going to want to take the case?"

"Yes. We would have the best luck on finding who it was. Gideon has put away hundreds of killers and his death could very well be at their hands or the hands of a family member."

"Yeah, I would not want to go through that many case files to try and figure out who killed him. I'll gladly hand the case over because the red tape to get those files is not worth my ego at finding the killer of a former FBI agent."

"I didn't say he was FBI."

"He had a commendation on his wall for his service in the FBI as part of a unit called the Behavioral Analysis Unit. Is that you guys?"

"Yes."

"Wait, I knew that I knew that name. Shit. God Hotchner, I'm sorry."

"I prefer Agent, but you can just call me Hotch. I don't stand on ceremony. My team will join me as if that's him; we will want to start as soon as possible."

"Go ahead and call your CSU as well. I know that I can't identify the body, Hotch but the images of him with a few people in the cabin are close enough that I will say that this is him. I just can't do it official-like."

"Thank you, Officer Miller. Is this your cell phone?"

"Yes."

"I'll text the make and model of my car as well as those that my team will be driving. I know those woods well, and I know that it can be hard to figure out what cars are what."

"You got it." Miller hung up the phone and Aaron looked up at Spencer to see that he was compiling the things he would need to work a case without going into the BAU offices. Aaron agreed that it would be best to work form Gideon's cabin until they knew more.

"It's him?" Spencer asked.

"The officer there is pretty sure that it is."

"The team is going to be about twenty minutes behind us, but they are getting ready. Garcia is bringing everything that she needs to work form Gideon's cabin."

"Good. What about Jack?"

"Ri is going to stay until Petal is done with wrapping the egg rolls, but Ri can get a hold of her if something happens. I've already written Jack a note and am going to leave it at his bedside as I got up to get my gun from the safe. Jessica will come by on her way to work and get Jack ready for school and take him. Then Anderson is going to pick him up and take him back to our offices until he gets off work."

"You've been busy."
"As soon as you said next of kin and talked about a son. I knew that it was nothing good. When I figured out it was Gideon, then I started to get ready because I seriously doubted that between you and Rossi you were going to let this go without the BAU looking into it. So I figured it was better to be prepared than it was not to be."

"I'm going to change back into a suit, but you are fine in what you are wearing."

"I wasn't planning on changing. This was what I wore to work today, so I know that it was fine to wear." Spencer gave Aaron a grin and started up the left side set of steps into the second floor. Spencer was in the bedroom at the safe by the time that Aaron got into the room. Aaron went right to the walk-in closet and started to get dressed. He didn't talk as he picked out a suit to wear. He wasn't sure what kind of things they were going to get into so he wore one that was forgiving of mud given the fact that they were going to a cabin. Spencer was sitting on the edge of the bed with his phone in hand; he wasn't texting but more like he was looking at something at a close range giving the pinching that he was doing on the screen.

"The cabin is pretty out there. I knew the GPS coordinates of it, but I've never been there. I think that maybe the bigger car would be better."

Aaron heard a noise down below and then something in what sounded like it might have been Chinese. It seemed that Petal had beat them up. Since they had been down on the first floor, they had not set the alarm or locked the door. Spencer had to have made sure not to lock it so that Petal could get in.

"Ready?" Spencer asked.

"No. I don't have my standard gun or my backup. What do you have on you?"

"My gun and that's it. I'm not taking the knife with me. I don't feel like I need it at the moment. Though my skin has been itching lately."

"Why?"

"Something is coming. A storm of some kind that is going to change things. I don't know what it is, but I know that it's going to be bad."

"Well, let me know when it's here."

Aaron remembered that Jin and Petal had been on edge for a week as well. It was something horrible if more than just Spencer was feeling it. Aaron hoped that nothing significant was going to happen because he didn't want his life to change again. He and Spencer had settled into something perfect. Given that Spencer had lived as long as he had, it was shocking that he didn't like change. At this point for the many years, he had been alive; change had to be normal to him. Still, it was kind of adorable to Aaron that Spencer hated change. He hated when his morning routine was upset by UnSubs or even just by a Jack who wants to cuddle in bed between them as he talks about the dreams that he had. Jack's desk in the living room now had a computer on it. Well, a laptop that wasn't allowed to leave the desk unless he was just moving it to the coffee table or it was in it's carrying case that was bulletproof. Aaron had balked at that, but the present had come from Jackson with Spencer hinting that Jack was enjoying drawing as well as writing. There was a full artist set up for the laptop as well, but that had to stay at the desk.

It was nice watching Jack draw using the laptop. He would also scan his images onto a USB drive in the office and then upload them to the computer to finish working on them. The art stuff had been a present from Spencer while Aaron had tackled the writing bit and got Jack a few books on style.
"Ready?" Spencer asked as Aaron closed and buttoned his suit coat after stepping away from the safe. Aaron looked at the safe and frowned before he checked his person. He had put on the two guns by rote it seemed. Aaron nodded his head before turning to start for the door. Spencer fell into step behind him. Aaron stopped at Jack's door and checked on him. Stormy was asleep in the bed with him while Ri was sitting at his nightlight, reading a book. The Pixie could turn pages but usually couldn't keep the books open unless they were hardback. Stormy would sometimes swap the books for her, using her size to open the books and let Ri read.

Aaron walked to Jack and pressed a kiss to his forehead. Jack just sighed and smiled. It was the typical response when he was asleep, and they were around. Spencer laid a hand on Aaron's shoulder to draw him from the room. Ri gave a distracted wave, and Stormy just let out a soft snore.

The drive from the apartment to the cabin was filled with silence. Spencer was sitting with his head on the headrest and his eyes closed. Aaron wasn't sure what Spencer felt about this. Aaron wasn't sure what he felt about it. He found the road to the cabin easy in the dark mainly because of the police cruiser that was there. Aaron held up his credentials, and the officer keeping people away waved them through before getting on his radio to let those at the cabin know they were coming. Aaron was the first out of the car after he parked. He walked to the door, and it was opened. Aaron’s eyes took in the room, including the evidence that there had been more than just the single shot. Spencer went right to the picture frame that was damaged, and he frowned.

Aaron crouched at the body covered in a sheet as he pulled on the gloves that the woman by the body handed him, and pulled back the covering over the head and looked down. He covered the head back up before bowing his own.

"Hotch?" Officer Miller asked.

"It's Jason Gideon."

"Okay, then I'll keep my men and women here until your team arrives and can secure the scene. We have still been taking pictures and collecting evidence. I had the glass cleaned up from the frame to make sure that none of my staff were injured and bleed over things."

Aaron looked at Spencer as Officer Miller talked. He was still staring at the picture frame. Then he turned to the body very quickly. Spencer took a pair of gloves from the woman, and he pulled the sheet down, his eyes weren't on the face though but at the bullet holes on the body.

"He was wounded first in his dominant arm," Spencer said.

"Okay," Aaron said. He knew that Spencer would connect it when he could. Sometimes it took a little to get his thoughts together.

"The killer wasn't prepared to get close for the kill until he was sure that Gideon wouldn't be able to fight back," Spencer said.

"I agree based on what I see so far."

"Gideon even injured was a good shot with both hands, well enough to protect himself. He's stayed up with his gun training even not part of the BAU. He wanted to be able to protect himself."

"How do you know that?" Aaron asked.

"Guides and the Oxford English Dictionary, as well as the American version and those, were both on the shelf under the desktop. There was just enough room for them as well as the grammar books and a few other random weird but aimed at kids writing books.
"I removed him from the BAU and the FBI, Aaron. There was no way that I was not going to track him. I had enough of vengeance killers coming after me." Spencer looked at Officer Miller. "Have the bullet holes in the all been matched to anything?"

"The one that shot the picture frame was from the same caliber as the gun that we found by Agent Gideon. The two weapons were very different calibers."

"He didn't shoot that frame by accident. The angle is not right. He did it for a reason."

Aaron heard a car door, and he stood up, taking the gloves off. He walked to the door and found that it was Dave. Dave looked determined. Aaron didn't try and stop him as he came inside and took a fresh pair of gloves and crouched beside Spencer at the body. Dave touched Gideon's face a little after he let the sheet drop.

"I'm going to go to the morgue with the body," Spencer said as he stood up.

"The ME is ready to take him whenever," Officer Miller said. "They will take him to the local or to the FBI if you want."

"Local is fine," Spencer said. There were more car doors, and Spencer walked to the door, tossing the gloves into the bag that was on the porch that was for their trash as to not contaminate. It was the rest of the team. Morgan and JJ led with Garcia and Prentiss coming in behind them. Morgan locked eyes with Spencer and Spencer nodded his head.

Aaron shook hands with Stephen again and then turned to Gideon's Ex-wife, Annie Gideon who had kept Gideon's last name despite the divorce.

"He was talking to me again," Annie said as she looked down at the grave that was in front of her. Stephen was now talking to Spencer. "He apologized for the fact that even when he was home, he wasn't. That was what I couldn't take. I still talked to Dave on occasion. He said that your ex-wife couldn't even take just having that. I wonder if that could have been me."

"No, Haley had a lot more issues than just that. She wasn't the best at being alone, but it's what she signed up for when she agreed to have me join the FBI."

Annie looked at Spencer and frowned before looking at Aaron. "He's pretty young."

"That's because he doesn't age, Annie. He's a God."

"Oh, that's right. I remembered Jason talking about that. He also told me that you are a New God? How did that happen?"

"I think because I'm married to my job at the FBI, really. No reason for me to move on. If you need anything, anything at all, even if it's just law help getting what you deserve for the years you were together, then just call me. My door is always open to you and to Stephen."

"I know. I know that if I had ever needed anything you would make sure that it happened. I know that Stephen likes you and that's enough of a reason to trust you." Annie gave Aaron a hug, and as she walked away to wrap her arms around Stephen, Spencer turned to look at Morgan and Dave who were still standing at the graveside. Aaron walked over to join them. Prentiss, JJ, and Garcia were on the other side.

"This is not the end that he would have wanted, but he did what he could to help us solve the case that killed him," Dave said as he looked at Aaron. Aaron nodded his head in agreement.
"There is a small bar that Gideon took me to once," Spencer said as he buttoned the jacket on his suit. He looked at Morgan with a thin smile on his face. "Back when he was trying to teach me about profiling while I was still in the Academy. I bought the place out, and it's just going to be us agents there, Stephen as well. Annie is going home. Gideon would not have wanted the big to do that is a meal after the funeral, but I think that a send-off with stories of the things that he did is the right way to do it."

"That sounds pretty good," Aaron said.

Spencer waved toward the limos that were waiting for them. It was another thing that Spencer had bought. Gideon had paid for his funeral a long time before. Aaron knew that. Gideon had told him to do the same thing that way everything would be the way that he wanted instead of something for his family to worry about. Aaron had done it, which he had forgotten about until just then. He looked at Spencer and wondered how Spencer handled that when he lived as a Human. He knew that there were ways of hiding who he was and that there had to be Gods in places to make sure that no Human was the wiser when a God was acting as a Human.

Aaron was silent on the ride to the bar that Spencer had talked about. Aaron looked outside as they pulled up to it. It was a place that Aaron knew well. He swore that Gideon lived there a few times in his life. He never went for the alcohol. He rarely drank enough even to make himself buzzed, but he would sip at a drink and watch the people. Aaron had spent a few nights with him there.

There were a few agents already inside, and there was just the bartender when it came to staff that Aaron could see. He knew that simple food was offered. Fried or grilled meals. There was a row of spots open at the bar for all eight of them as they got inside. The bartender started to pour out eight drinks into tumblers.

"It's an open bar," Spencer said.

"That's good," Dave said as he stepped up to the bar to pick up the first drink. He downed it and set it back down. When the bartender got to the end, he filled up Dave's again. "How about how we get home?"

"I have that under control as well. For everyone as long as they don't mind sharing a ride with another agent."

Aaron looked around the room and took in the faces that were there. Some of them were agents that Gideon had helped in one way or another or favorites of his when he taught classes at the Academy. All of the BAU was there as well as Garrett's IRT. Aaron raised his glass to Garrett and Garrett raised his back.

"To Jason Gideon!" Aaron said before he tossed back the Human scotch.

Everyone else in the bar did the same, including the bartender. Aaron settled at the bar and settled in for the stories that were to come. Spencer tucked himself into Aaron's side. Spencer didn't seem that affected by this, but then he was never that close to Gideon despite what the others thought. Aaron figured that Spencer grieved in his own way that was from years of losing everyone that he met that were not Gods. Aaron laid his head on Spencer's shoulder and listened as Dave talked. This was the best way to say goodbye to Gideon.

Agents dropped off as time went until it was just Aaron and his team in the room. Aaron had no clue what time it was. He didn't think that he wanted to know.

"You know," Morgan said. He looked at the glass of water he was drinking and then looked at
Aaron. "He's the only BAU agent to be killed directly by an UnSub. Bale took out agents, but that was by a bomb. He didn't hold the weapon in his hand and fire it. Brannon died by Bale's bomb but not by his hand, there would have been a way to save him. I never saw this coming."

"None of us did. We worry about the UnSubs that we put away; forty years sounds like a long time except for when you get the end of those forty years, and you are still alive, and now the UnSub has been hardened by time in jail, and you are weakened by complacency." Dave looked like he had a bad taste in his mouth as he spoke. He huffed once and shook his head before taking a drink of water. It seemed like the whole team had swapped to water at some point. Aaron was stone cold sober, but then the bar didn't stock anything that would get a God drunk.

"I already have things in place to make sure that no one who gets out of prison will ever touch members of the BAU no matter what team they are on," Spencer said. He was staring down into his glass of water like it would give him the answer to life. "I have lost too many friends to senseless violence over my years. I don't plan on losing any of you to the same thing."

"To friends gone," Prentiss said as she raised her glass.

It was just silence until the team decided that they should head home. Aaron knew that Spencer was driving Prentiss back to their place and then she was going to go home with Jessica who was watching Jack. Aaron hadn't cared about that, even if Prentiss and Jessica wanted to stay. Prentiss had never worked with Gideon, but everyone knew him.

"Let's go home," Spencer said as he wrapped his arms around Aaron and Prentiss before directing them out of the bar. Aaron looked back to see that Spencer had paid cash, a stack of money sat on the bar. Even if those were hundreds, Aaron was pretty sure it was about triple what they had actually consumed in alcohol and food.

"Yes, lets," Aaron said as he turned back to focus on leaving. Spencer was helping keep Prentiss on her feet, so Aaron opened up the passenger seat to allow Spencer to help her into the seat. Aaron then got into the passenger front seat. He wasn't sure when the numbness was going to go away. Aaron had thought that he had time to mend fences with Gideon but time was an illusion.
Chapter 37

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

I can be shocked. I can be devastated. I can lose the will to live. Humans did not make perfect beings when they made Gods. If they did, I would not have any of those emotions. I would be a cold-hearted bastard who can watch a child drown and not save them. Yes, I judge people when they do wrong, but most Humans are innocent in one way, shape, or form. Or their sins, as it were, are so small. Yes, I am there for them when they need it if I can be. I can hear Humans praying, but if they don't pray to me, I ignore.

When another God prays to me by name, I listen. When that God really prays very hard to me, I react.

When Ar is begging for me to help him, I go to war.

April 2015

Aaron wasn't even sure what was going on. He had his eyes closed to stop the room from spinning. He hadn't felt like this in a long time, he had nothing that reacted in him like this. Peter Lewis had got ready for him very quickly, and Aaron didn't like that. His team had not been chasing Lewis for long enough that he would have had enough time to get ready for drugging a New God. Which means that he knew. Aaron forced his eyes open so that he could call the team to keep Spencer away if Lewis was ready for Aaron, he would be ready for Spencer and Aaron couldn't have that.

"Oh, no. No. You can't call him and stop him from coming, Ar. He has to come, and he has to see you die again."

Aaron tried to understand the words, but he couldn't. He couldn't understand them at all. Peter Lewis had killed a lot of people, mimicking a few deaths here and there. He had killed all of the kids that his mother and father had taken in to help. He was a jealous child who grew up to resent all of the kids that his parents had helped. It had not been hard to profile him and then find him. It had taken the smarts of everyone on the team, more Spencer's than anyone else's but then they were dealing with someone who hacked the DOJ. It had been hard to find, but also kind of easy to find him, Aaron now knew that it was a trap. The fact that Lewis called him Ar meant that somehow the man knew exactly who he was.

"These drugs don't work like what I let the Humans experience. I can't make you see your worst nightmare. As much as I would love to see you watch as I killed Mimir, I can't do that. I can't make you see yourself killing him. The minds of Gods are protected. I can keep you subdued until he gets here though. I can keep you down until he's in the door and then I will kill you the same way that I did the first time. The same drug, different knife, stabbed through your heart so that the poison kills you better this time. I almost had him to where I wanted him. I nearly had my Mimir to where he would finally love me, and you took him away from me, again. I won't abide that the third time."

Aaron kept his eyes closed, and he begged. He begged for Spencer to stay away. He had no clue who this man thought he was, but Aaron's mind was piecing together that he knew precisely who the both of them were and he thought that he was the damned God that had killed him the first time. He tried to figure out exactly how to get out of the predicament that he was, but he was coming up with nothing. His limbs felt like lead, and he was unable to move at all. Aaron knew that his gun was
somewhere in the room, but he didn't know where. His backup gun was strapped to his ankle, Lewis had not taken that from him yet. Aaron wasn't sure if it was that Lewis didn't know it was there or he didn't fear Aaron's gun. Either way, it was going to be a mistake.

Forcing his body to move, Aaron got close to tipping over onto his side. He tried to make that happen, but it just wasn't.

"Oh, you are just as strong as you used to be," Lewis said, and he shoved at Aaron getting him onto his side.

Aaron didn't know if the man was watching him still or not. Aaron didn't really care. He felt his knee with his hand, so he knew that he was getting closer. He tried to get just that little closer, but he felt worn out. He would have to wait. Aaron felt the world drifting again, but just as he was sure that he was going to lose his grip on reality, he felt it. He knew that it wasn't time for the team to get there, so Spencer had to have done that teleportation thing that he was able to on occasion.

"He's here early, I should go and get set up for him," Lewis said.

Aaron heard his footsteps walking away from him. Aaron tried to get his eyes open, but the world was still spinning, and he felt like he was going to be sick, so he closed them again.

"New Gods are fucking stupid," Spencer said.

Aaron did force his eyes open at that point. Spencer was standing there, and he had no gun in his hand. Aaron tried to open his mouth to tell Spencer what was going on, but he couldn't make his lips move. He felt Spencer getting the gun and tried to figure out why Spencer was not using his own. Aaron looked at his waist to see that Spencer did not have a gun there. Aaron let out a croak, his first noise. Spencer looked up at him and gave Aaron a fond smile before he leaned over and gave Aaron a kiss. The first was on the lips with the second on his cheek and the final one on his forehead.

"He's not leaving here alive, Aaron." Spencer stood up, and Aaron followed the movement. It was strange to see Spencer look...well look like he did. He looked like a lot more and a lot less in the same instance.

"Mimir," Lewis said as he stepped into the room.

"Kharássö," Spencer said.

The name made Aaron feel like shit, and he had never felt that before. It was like his body, his mind, his soul, his Godness knew that name and feared it.

"He's going to die. You are mine, and you always have been. You've grieved him longer than I thought that you would, but you'll learn to love me."

"I wouldn't love you if you were the last God in the world, the last Human, the last dog. You are going to die, and you are going to stay dead this time."

"You will love ME!" Lewis said, and he rushed at Spencer.

Spencer calmly raised up his gun and fired it three times. The first shot went into Lewis's shoulder, and Aaron heard the bone shattering. The next was in the gut and then the third through the opposite knee from the shoulder that had been shot. Lewis went down like a ton of bricks when he put his weight onto that leg. He looked at Spencer in shock. It would almost be laughable if it weren't for the fact that Humans who thought that people loved them when they didn't ever saw it coming.
"You'll drop out of the annals of history, again, because I am going to make sure of it. Your name hasn't been said in millennia, Kharássō. Your new name won't be either. You'll be a footnote in the BAU files as someone who died horribly. You won't even be named as a New God. You'll be some stupid Human who thought that he could take on the BAU and win. No one has ever fully taken on the BAU and won, yes a few have won against a person here and there, but never the whole unit though. How do you feel about that? That your legacy will be erased again because you couldn't understand that I don't love you. I could never love someone who demands that I love them."

"He's not better than me," Lewis croaked out.

"He's better than you in every single way, shape, and form. He's never going to demand that I love him. He wasn't even going to demand more from me than sex on cases because he wanted as much as I was willing to give him. I was your best friend, we were good as that but you decided that you wanted me and what I wanted didn't matter. I shouldn't be shocked, but I am because Humans do that shit all the time. They feel that a little kindness, a little friendship, and they have the right to take whatever they want from the person they have been nice to. A relationship friendship or otherwise is not something that you put quarters in until you get a fucking prize. Sex is not a prize to be won like that. Sex is a connection, love is a connection and having one without the other when you want a full relationship, means that you aren't ready for a relationship."

Aaron's eyes were drawn to Spencer as he moved over to where Lewis was. Aaron watched as he reached to his side and drew something. He couldn't see what it was as it was on the side that Aaron wasn't facing. He just stared at Spencer as he crouched down, his body dropping on Lewis's legs to keep him still. Lewis screamed in pain. Aaron didn't remember acting like that when he had been shot.

"You know one of the worst parts about my job? My main gun is tested more than anything else, so if there were someone who was a mole on the inside, they would know that I carried what is called God Killer bullets. Not a lot of people know about them. It doesn't actually kill a God, but if I were shot with it, I wouldn't be able to smite anyone, and I wouldn't be able to just disappear and run to safety. No, I would be stuck wherever I am. For New Gods? It's utter hell. It means that they can't tap into that stream of connection that makes them a New God. They can't heal. It also makes sure that I can do what I want to them." Spencer's hand became visible, and Aaron got to see as Lewis freaked the fuck out as he took in the knife in Spencer's hand. Aaron knew that knife even though he had rarely seen it. It had been a gift to him. Spencer drug the tip of the blade up Lewis's shirt and it split open and fell to the side, showing his skin, with the blood streaking it from the gut shot and the dripping down from the shoulder shot. Spencer followed that same path, and he got to watch as the blood foamed or boiled, he wasn't sure as it welled up on Lewis's skin.

Spencer stopped the blade right in the center of Lewis's chest, and he pushed it down and in. It wasn't near the heart, but Aaron realized that it wasn't Spencer's plan to kill the New God quickly. He wanted him to suffer. He wanted him to feel every single second before he killed him, and Aaron knew that death was the plan because there was no way that Spencer was going to let him live.

"Please," Lewis begged.

"Ar said that the first time. You are the one that told me that. You told me that he begged for his life. That he begged to just be allowed to live. You told me that the last words on his lips were words of love for me. That he didn't care about his death except for how it would effect me. How he didn't want to leave me alone. He begged, and you ignored him. You ignored the fact that I wanted nothing to do with you. You Kharássō are going to die and just like before I'm not going to let you rule my life. I'm going to live and think of you as little as possible. Maybe one day I'll sit down, and I'll write that volume number one of my journals. I'll your story without every using your name. You'll be a
footnote that I forget."

"I'll be back."

"No, you won't. This knife?" Spencer said as he held it up so that Lewis could see it, pulling it from his body. Lewis screamed and whimpered. Aaron saw that the blood that had been on it was gone. It was like it had never been except for the blade was darker. It had been a sandy colored before now, but it was dark, like dried blood. "They are rare and only manifest with the birth of certain Gods. See, the magic that creates us also gives us the ability to kill ourselves. Whatever the first blood this knife tastes, it will never be able to harm anyone else."

Spencer held out his hand, and he drew is across his hand. Nothing happened. Even Aaron could see the skin dent but not get pierced by the blade. He then made another mark on Lewis's chest, and Lewis screamed.

Aaron wanted this over. He wanted Spencer to stop playing with Lewis, so he started to move. He felt like he could move like he could get to him. Spencer said nothing else, his attention not on Aaron at all but just on Lewis. It wasn't until Aaron touched his foot that Spencer looked at him.

"Give me a moment, Aaron. I've been dreaming of this for years."

"Just end it," Aaron said.

"I will." Spencer turned back to Lewis and looked at him. "This knife will end you. You will never be born again. Kharássō will die his final death, and he will never come back. Peter Lewis will also never be born. He's an unfortunate bystander in this. You could have been such a good person, such a good God, but you chose to covet that which wasn't yours. This is your price."

Spencer leaned forward, and Aaron watched as he put the tip of the knife at Lewis's head and then pushed. It slid inside. There was no brute force to it. There was just the slide of the knife inside like Spencer was pushing it through water. Lewis didn't even fight him. It was like he was drugged himself. There was no blood, and that made Aaron frown. There was no blood seeping around the wound. When it was down to the hilt, Spencer left it there and got up. Aaron saw that he had no blood on him either. He walked over to Aaron and reached down to grab his arm. Aaron felt like a child being picked up by an adult as he was slotted into Spencer's side. Aaron didn't even need to try and walk. The team was rolling up when they exited the house as well as an ambulance.

Dave was the first to reach Aaron with Morgan right behind him, and he grabbed Aaron's other side.

"Where is Lewis?" Prentiss asked as she got close.

"Dead. He's dead. Don't touch his body. Just secure the outside. We need to get the God body retrieval team here."

"He was a God?" Dave asked.

"He's a fucking dead God who is never coming back to bother me again," Spencer said. The EMTs opened the door to the back of the ambulance and Spencer, and Morgan carried Aaron over and set him down on the floor. Spencer sat down beside him, helping to keep him up.

Aaron felt fingers on his face, and he looked to see that it was Apollo. Aaron slumped down, letting what little control he was trying to keep on his body go.

"What the hell was he drugged with?" Apollo asked.
"I have no clue, but he can't move. Not really, he can kind of force his body to move some, but it's not good."

"You are not covered in blood, which means that you used that knife. I'm shocked."

"Why?" Spencer asked.

"I know exactly who you were saving that for."

"And? Kharássō is dead, dead, and gone."

"That was him?" Apollo looked behind to where the team was securing the house. "Fuck. He went right for Ar again?" Apollo looked back at Aaron, and he shined a light in his eyes.

"He needs this drug out of his system."

"I agree. Okay, you get him on the gurney an strapped down. As soon as the call for an EMT to follow the BAU to a location came through, I volunteered as I can treat Gods and Humans. I was the best. Plus it got me out of the ER for a little while. Is the body retrieval on their way?"

"Yes," Morgan said from behind Apollo. Aaron leaned over to look at him. "I've got this Hotch. I'll make sure that nothing happens. What about the victim?"

"Dead. She's dead," Aaron said.

"Then we have no reason to breach the zone. JJ is on the phone with the news outlets getting control of this."

"Why?" Aaron asked. He looked at Apollo and then forced his head around to look at Spencer.

"Because the death of him was felt all around the area. I can't track down how far yet. The other BAU teams are working on that, and Garcia is monitoring all of the reports that are coming in. Humans felt it. We weren't sure who had died until we saw you two walk out," JJ said.

Aaron looked at Spencer, and it was then that he lost his ability to stay awake. He watched the world darken, and he saw that fear in Spencer's eyes. He couldn't do a damned thing about it either.

Aaron felt warm, and he knew that he was in a bed. He knew that Spencer was beside him, sitting up but a little under the blanket. Aaron's hand was on his thigh. Aaron was on his side, and he felt something bunched at his back to stop him from falling off the bed. He could hear voices talking low before the door opened.

"I'm sorry, this room is off limits."

"It's okay. It's the people who are not happy that I killed someone who was subdued," Spencer said.

"Well, if they want to talk, they are not doing it here, and you are the only thing that is keeping my patient asleep. I don't give a fuck if you are the President of the United States. Agent Hotchner is not released to give his statement, and since his recovery is based on Agent Reid staying close, then you had better get out."

"I'll bring Hotch to the BAU as soon as he's released. Why don't we save it for then?"

Aaron wanted to tell them that he was awake, but he couldn't. He slipped back into sleep.
Aaron was in his favorite suit with Spencer dressed to the nines as well. He wasn't in a suit, but he was in an outfit that made him look like a teacher. Aaron didn't feel like he was 100%, but he did feel at least mostly himself. He had slept for a day, Spencer told him. The scene had been processed, and the meeting had gone from something at the BAU to something that was taking place in the Hoover building. The whole team had already been talked to, but thankfully none of them knew much of anything that happened after they had split up.

Spencer had left the SUV that had been bringing the team to Aaron, and it had freaked them all out. Spencer opened the door to the room and ushered Aaron in. There were two seats open, so Aaron took the one that was beside Dave while Spencer took the one right beside it that put him beside Aaron and Morgan. Aaron only looked up at the assembled people when he was settled into his seat. The door opened, and Aaron looked away to see who entered. It was John. There was no room for him up the dais where the rest were sitting so he settled himself down onto the end closest to where Spencer was.

"You were not invited to this," the woman in the center said.

"No, but as this has to two with two of my Gods, that means that I am allowed to be at everything that involves them." John didn't even turn around to look at them. He looked at Spencer and nodded his head. Spencer nodded back.

"Let's get this underway. Why was Peter Lewis killed? Given the amount of blood that came from his wounds, he had been shot a good while before he was stabbed and then before the killing blow happened. It is not the standard operating procedure of the FBI and especially not the BAU to kill a target after they have been subdued."

Aaron didn't know the woman, but he already didn't like her. He didn't like that they had no introduced themselves.

"Is the knife here?" Spencer asked.

"Yes," John said he looked at the table where there were evidence bags. Aaron figured that they were his guns, the drugs that he had been given as well as a collection of other things.

Spencer stood up and walked over to pick up the knife. He didn't walk up to the woman but instead handed it to John. John inhaled sharp and deep. He knew what the knife was.

"When I was hired, I wrote in as part of my job contract that if there came a day that I came across a certain God, I reserved the right to kill him every single time that I met him. Then I was given that knife a few years after I had joined the team. I changed that contract that I would kill the man with severe prejudice. Someone was leaving that place dead. If Aaron had been the one to die, then two would have. Peter Lewis was a New God who had somehow figured out who he had been the first time that he had lived, which was a very long time ago. He was slaughtered after being tortured the first time. The torture I gave him this time was less than what he deserved, but unlike so long ago, I have stopped playing with my toys. Peter Lewis used to be a God named Kharássö. That God's name has been wiped from all record except for the minds of the Gods who lived at that time and mine. I find that it's written down in your files, and I'll remove it from your head."

"Mimir has never written about him," the woman said.

"No, I would not have. It was my want that he never was born again. I didn't trust that, and it was why I had put that into my contract."

"You are trying to tell us that you are Mimir?" one of the others asked.
"Yes. I'm Mimir. I can find out all knowledge when it's written down, printed, and a few other forms. Never let his name escape your lips, just to be safe."

"Mimir has talked about a great love. Are you trying to tell us that this great love is Agent Hotchner? Were you both playing us?"

"Kharássō killed Ar, the great love as Humans have come to call him. He was never going to let Aaron live because Kharássō thought that he was in love with me and deserved me more than Ar. He was never going to stop gunning for Aaron. I guess you could think about it like Harry Potter only one can live. He drugged Aaron and was going to kill him as soon as I got there, but I got to Aaron before he could by teleportation right to Aaron."

"Teleporting is only from Old Gods or really old New Gods," John said.

"Smiting too, on the Old Gods bit that is. But then there is no actual record that I have smote anyone."

"There is an Old God in the FBI, and we are just now finding that out?" the woman demanded.

John laughed as he turned to look at her. "There is probably more than just Mimir, but when the FBI decided that they wanted the Gods in the ranks, they made concessions that the paperwork can't ask them what they are. Agent Reid has disclosed this to who needs to know it. Secrets are only kept; they are kept, not blabbed. Though I hate that it has come to this, I'm glad for one that there is not another madman who is hunting one of our people. Had Lewis lived, I think that he would have gone after Agent Hotchner in any way that he could have and who knows the fallout of that."

"I would also like to point out and remind every single person here," Aaron said as he stood up. He looked at his team, seeing the look of shock on their faces which would help sell hopefully that they didn't know. He looked at John and nodded at him before looking at the other members of the FBI in the eye for several seconds each before moving on. "That revealing the status of a God has recently become a fireable offense. The last I knew the whole of the FBI had signed the new addendum to their FBI contract. It also allows for the God to sue you. You might not be afraid of Spencer Reid, who he has been as a New God but I've seen him email with several high powered lawyers about other things in the past few years. He would destroy your career and your personal life. So remember that. If it comes out, I'll make sure you are destroyed myself."

"You can sit down, Agent Hotchner this board knows well what the new rules are for working in the FBI. I have to assume that this was pushed forward to protect your little fucking pet." The man who said the words sneered as he said it.

"Actually, I wasn't aware of it until I got the paperwork to sign," Spencer said. He leaned back in his chair and looked at the man like he was bored. It was a look that Spencer had perfected before he had joined the team, so Aaron wondered precisely when he had, probably when he was still just an all-powerful God when all Humans feared the Gods and worshiped them in turns.

The man scoffed.

"He's correct, and it was the Director of the FBI who wanted to put it into place after he was read in on who Agent Reid was. He takes the security of his agents personally. If the world at large found out that Mimir is an FBI agent, we would have a clusterfuck on our hands. So he wanted to make sure that no one ever did it to him or any other agent. We cannot be on two different fronts when it comes to the security of the FBI. I'm sure that most of you have read his journals. You know the shit he has done. You know the shit that has been done to him. So keep your lips shut and remember that he would be allowed to hunt you for sport if he decided that you are a threat to him, his lover, or the
child they have been raising together since Hotch's wife was caught cheating on him. There isn't a person who has seen them together from the moment that Jack was born that can't say that Agent Reid loves Jack any less than he would a child of his own."

"Dismissed," the woman said.

Aaron waited for everyone else to get up and leave before he did. He glared at the woman, and she ignored him, but he could tell that she knew what he was doing. Aaron didn't really care one way or another. John was waiting on him outside, with the team hovering around as well.

"You shoved this through his head?" John demanded of Spencer.

"It wasn't that hard. Those knives...they are-" Spencer closed his lips and quirked them in the motion that meant he was thinking. "Well, they can't even cut anyone else. It's going to break down in that bag. There is a reason that the unfixed Crysknife from Dune was something that came about in the stories. It will disintegrate since it's killed who it's supposed to. It could last until the end of time if it never killed a God. It couldn't even give someone a bruise at this point, but after I cut him, it reacted with the blood to make it where only that person will ever be hurt by it. It wouldn't cut me when I tried to slice my hand open by it after it tasted his blood. When what creates us makes a God who ends up doing something horrible, they give us the ability to kill them. We police our own, and as soon as Kharassō was born again, the magic was watching him. Then he did something that they could not forgive, and it was probably deciding that I was his, and they gave me the ability to kill him. He's never coming back."

"So someone could go around with one of those and kill someone, and they would never return?"

"A God. Only a single God and using it on someone who it was not meant to be used on would send someone after them. God history is usually verbal and spread far and wide. There is a reason some Old Gods don't like the New Ones, they don't honor the tradition of what we are. There is changing with the times, which the Old Gods have done, an there is spitting in the face of everything that one is." Spencer turned and looked at Aaron, grinning at him. "Still there are some New Gods who worship us Old Gods, and it feels damned good. Come, love, take me home and show me how much you worship me."

"My ears," Morgan said, but he was laughing as he said it. He covered his ears up and made like he heard something horrible by the look on his face.

"I'll pick up Jack from school and hang out with him until Jessica gets off work. Then we can bring over dinner. Enough for an army so that you two can refuel." Prentiss looked like she was trying not to laugh. Aaron leaned in a gave her a kiss on the cheek. He repeated that with JJ and Garcia. He grinned at Dave before hugging him. Dave forced a kiss on each of his cheeks. Morgan and Aaron just hugged. Aaron saw that Spencer's hugs with the girls were taking longer than normal, and when it was Morgan's time, Morgan hugged him tightly. The team had faced a lot of things over the years, but Aaron figured that they were just going to get worse. The world was getting darker with each day, and Aaron wondered if that wasn't the problem of the Gods, since they were basically at a cold war with each other. Aaron hoped that wouldn't always be the case.
Chapter 38

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

There is little in the world that I can't figure out. It sometimes takes little time and it sometimes it takes a while. Just because I have access to all information in the world doesn't mean that I know exactly how to get that information. I still have to hunt in my brain, especially in this age of digital technology. Still, I can find murders, and I can find rapists, kidnappers, and all manner of horrible people in the world. Out of all of the jobs that I have taken over my very long life, this is my favorite. I think that I could do this one forever.

September 2015

Aaron looked at Spencer as he slept. They had been run ragged with JJ out with the birth of Michael. Their cases had not got lighter, and their cases were actually very, very long at the moment. The other teams were just as busy, so no one was getting time off. Spencer had been the one to crack the last case, or at least get them on the trail of the killer they were hunting with Morgan giving them the next point. Aaron knew that Spencer had been the one to figure out that the last victim had been unable to drop the grenade in his hand. It had not stopped it from going off, but they had saved the victim's life. Well, he saved the victim's life enough to where he was able to stand trial for the killing of his fiance. The hitman was in custody, and from there, it was going to be a quick trial. Hell, it was going to be a fast everything for the man. There wasn't anything that could delay his trial, and he would be going to jail, hopefully for the rest of his life. Aaron just wasn't sure if the death penalty was going to be sought for him or not.

Spencer had been running himself ragged, and it seemed that it wasn't enough rest for his brain or his God powers. He had been asleep for over a day. It was Saturday now, and Aaron hoped that Spencer woke up soon. Jack had been a depressed child when Spencer had not been there to do anything with him last night. Aaron had entertained him as well as he could given the fact that Jack was used to Friday nights were spent with Spencer. Aaron enjoyed his typical Saturday evenings with Jack. It was never even as there were weeks that they were gone on one day, but not the other, but Aaron wasn't keeping score. He enjoyed the days that he had with Jack.

Aaron still wasn't exactly sure what exactly had happened, but Spencer had followed Montolo while Morgan had stayed with Captain Wilson and talked him out of killing himself. Spencer had come back dragging Montolo after he had been cuffed. Morgan had been the one to visit Montolo to threaten him for trying to kill Spencer. The local cops had been the one to tell the team about that. Spencer had not, which Aaron wasn't shocked about.

Spencer had come home and laid down after work and hadn't got up. Morgan had relayed the information given to him that whoever the us were that worked with Montolo wasn't going to stop and that their next target was the Dirty Dozen. Garcia was already setting searches for that, but the team had at least the weekend off so Aaron had told her not to actually go into the office but that she could check on her searches. It would be stupid to have one stall because it needed something. Aaron knew that searches sometimes required that.

"Morning, Hotch," Peaches said as he crawled up Aaron's shirt. Aaron had laid down and hadn't meant to fall asleep in his clothes.

"Good morning, Peaches. Are you hungry?" Aaron asked.
"No. No, I come to talk to you. Ri feels it and so doesn't Hubert," Peaches said.

"About what?"

"You worry about Pen. You worry, and you did all night long."

"Spencer caught a man that it seems is part of some kind of ring of hitmen or something like that and I'm afraid that he's going to be targeted."

"Pen has been targeted before, but you've not been around for that. I hear talk from others. From Jin and Petals, and those who live above. He'll be fine but if you like I can follow him around. Go on cases with you guys. I can come to work with you. Do everything with you."

"You don't need to Peaches. I'll get used to this."

"No, no, you won't, Hotch. You feel what's coming. You feel something like Pen has for years. He's let go since the death of that horrible God. He's relaxed, and Petal says that she's happy he's relaxed but now you are worked up the same way."

"You would really just follow us around?"

"I do, sometimes. I slip into Pen's bag and go into the office. I stay hidden, and I play little jokes. I took the lead from the pencils from one desk one time. I took the ink from a pen, and I still have it. One never knows when one will need ink for a pen."

"You sound a lot like Spencer."

"I sound like those I am around. I have moments like you, moments like Spencer, moments like Miss Jessica too. Less like Jack, because sounding like a child is not something that me and mine strive for. Ri has that issue more than I."

Aaron smiled and looked away from Spencer toward Peaches. The Pixie was on Aaron's shoulder, he was sitting on it like one would if they were sitting on a half wall. It was kind of cute. Aaron wouldn't mind having a second set of eyes on Spencer for the next while, maybe even Morgan when Spencer stayed at the station house. Aaron could just feel something coming and that kind of freaked him out.

"So what do you have planned for today?" Aaron asked.

"I gonna help Jin and Petal do some cleaning, and they are going to take me out for the really good sushi and hibachi. I am small and can fit in ducts and get them clean. It does better than paying someone to come in, and it is half-assed as Jin has said. I enjoy it. Well, I enjoy what comes after. There is a room at the hibachi that serves Gods and all manner of the creatures that Humans have created. It usually turns into a party. After food."

"And what about Ri?"

"She's laying in the sun on the roof. She's enjoying the warm weather we are having even if I hates it." Peaches slumped down, and it made Aaron laugh.

"You'll live."

"I know. I just don't wants to go outside any more than I have to. Jin has promised a late meal so if you need me to do something just ask. I have plenty of time before I help clean."
"I was going to stay in here with Spencer so if you'll settle in with Jack to make sure that he's not too bored and that Stormy doesn't ruin the whole apartment that would be great."

"He's still recovering. Killing a God no matter how easy it looks never is what someone wants. Even if it was someone who deserved it, it's contrary to who Spencer is. His powers are recovering slowly because of that. It's the cost of killing." Peaches stood up and took off with a jump from Aaron's shoulder.

Aaron looked at Spencer again. He was still asleep, Aaron knew that he had taken a set of pills that would allow him to sleep, but Aaron had never seen him sleep as long as he had at the moment. Aaron laid his hand on Spencer's skin. He was his normal temperature, which felt like a regular Human to Aaron now. Aaron kind of missed that warmth on days when he felt cold inside because of their job.

"Fuck," Aaron said as he felt the urge to have to go to the bathroom. He didn't want to leave the bed and the small haven he had there. Thankfully, he didn't have to leave the bedroom, but still, he was afraid that Spencer was going to wake while he was gone and then get up. Aaron took a few seconds to wrap Spencer up in the blanket to make sure that he would be waylaid in getting out of the bed.

Aaron finished in the bathroom quickly, even brushing his teeth after checking that Spencer was still in bed. Spencer was still dead to the world when Aaron got into bed, or at least he thought so, but as he untucked him, Aaron realized that Spencer had pulled an arm free and had put it back under. Aaron narrowed his eyes and aw that Spencer was smiling.

"How long have you been awake?" Aaron asked as he worked his hand under Spencer's shirt. Spencer had been dressed in a T-shirt of Aaron's and a pair of his sleep pants when he had passed out.

"Since you turned on the water to brush your teeth. I wanna go out. Spend the day wandering around DC with Jack, or even head somewhere else. Nothing far just...out."

"Sure." Aaron dropped a kiss on the back of Spencer's neck. He didn't want sex at the moment, he just wanted to hold Spencer while he was awake and able to talk. Aaron had never thought that he would actually miss Spencer talking. The last day with silence all around from him had shown Aaron that he relied on Spencer for a lot more than just him being around. Aaron knew that but feeling it, missing him when he was right there showed Aaron how deep Spencer was in his life.

John talking about Spencer having raised Jack alongside Aaron, had been the truth, but Aaron hadn't honestly thought that anyone else would think the same thing. That had been shown to him in April.

"I don't care where we go," Aaron said.

"Neither do I. Why don't we ask Jack?" Spencer asked. He reached down, getting his hand under his shirt and pulling Aaron's hand out. Spencer drew the hand up to his mouth and kissed the back of it before turning it over and kissing the palm. It was simple acts of affection like that made Aaron fall in love with him just a little more.

Spencer soothed Aaron in so many different small ways. It was never just one single thing that Aaron could figure out but a whole bunch of little things that never seemed all that important. It was interesting to see Spencer do things that he didn't realize he was doing that helped to settle Aaron. Spencer had been alone for so long, Aaron didn't count his relationship with Jackson, that was something that about sex and nothing else. While Spencer and Jackson seemed to care for each other, there was no deep love. There might be a love of sex, but that was about it. Jackson had only come back once since their first night together. Aaron would never hold against Spencer the things that he
did to stay alive since his first death to now. Aaron wasn't that kind of person.

"I love you," Aaron said as he buried his head into Spencer's neck a little more, inhaling the scent of him. Fresh and clean even after sleeping for over a day.

"I love you, too. What has you so sentimental?" Spencer asked.

"Just appreciating that you are talking now. I've missed you over the past day."

"It's been a day? Damn." Spencer reached out for his phone and checked it. "Huh. Wow. I have a lot of missed things. So we are going to head out with Jack and then dinner in a park, even if we just pick up picnic things at a shop somewhere."

"Sounds like a good Saturday."

"It does, doesn't it?" Spencer asked.

Aaron didn't move. At some point, Jack would come in and push them out of bed, especially when he realized that Spencer was awake. Jack was ten, and he was still very hyper and loving. Aaron wasn't looking forward to his moody teenage years. He wondered how Spencer handled them for the kids he had raised over the years. Aaron kind of didn't want to know, he didn't want to know what to look forward to. It was one instance where Aaron figured that ignorance was bliss.

Jack was playing with a group of kids in a park in the middle of Alexandria. It was where they had been when they had got hungry, so they stayed. Aaron had gone to a store to get a soccer ball while Spencer and Jack had got to know the kids and their parents. It was interesting to see Jack interacting with kids who were his age but didn't dislike him. Though it was not a school setting. It was a thing that made Aaron happy that he was at New Haven and not a regular school.

Dinner had been eaten, shared with some of the kids as well. It was why Aaron was getting the soccer ball. It was to be kept in the car so that Jack could play with kids if they went anywhere else and didn't think to grab one.

Aaron settled in beside Spencer at the picnic table after tossing the ball over to Jack. The kids were all ages, but it looked like they were all having a lot of fun. It was interesting to see the parents who were actually watching their kids. It was why Aaron liked the park. While not every single parent was aware of everything at every single second, all of them seemed to actually care about all of the kids, including stopping younger kids from getting too far if the parents were dealing with someone else. They were all watching all of the kids instead of their phone. Aaron had that issue with Jack's soccer group. Most of the parents spent more time on their phones than anything else. It was why Aaron was now the coach. There was another parent who helped him if he was out of town for work. So far they had only missed a few games but the season was almost over.

"So, we are going to have to come back here more often," Spencer said as he leaned into Aaron.

Aaron darted his eyes over the other parents in the area. So far, not a single one of them had batted a single eye at them. Even when Aaron had walked around with his hand on the small of Spencer's back at the start. It seemed like a really good park.

"I agree."

"Excuse me," a voice said behind them.

Aaron turned around first to see that it was a trio of kids. There was an older teenage boy and two
younger girls. They looked to be twins.

"You are Agent Hotchner, yes?" the boy asked.

"Yes." Aaron turned around fully, pulling his leg up onto the top of the table Spencer had been sitting on the table top when Aaron had got there, so Aaron had done the same.

"My name is Jacob, and these are my sisters Evangeline and Lily. Lily said that it was you, but I didn't believe her."

Aaron looked at the kids. He looked at the girls who now that he knew the names of, he knew precisely who they were. It was a case just before Spencer had joined the team. The BAU had been called in because a suspect had been accused of killing his wife and then trying to kill himself, but the suspect had been adamant that someone else came in and did it. Morgan had made a comment about the one-armed man having been proved to be right in Fugitive, and so Aaron and Morgan had taken the case while the rest of the team stayed at the office and worked on other things.

"Well, Lily and I spent a long time together. I am not shocked that she remembered me. Where is your father?"

"Working. He gets off in half an hour, and he's going to join us here. He usually has the weekends with us, but he traded a weekday for a weekend shift because Angie and Lily's class had a trip and he went as a chaperone."

Lily came around the table and hugged Aaron before crawling up to sit beside him. Jacob and Angie came around as well. Angie was looking at Spencer with a weird look.

"Angie, Lily, Jacob, this is my partner Doctor Agent Spencer Reid."

"Oh, you!" Angie said with a grin breaking out on her face. "I remember reading about you. You are the New God who joined Mister Hotch's team."

"Mister Hotch?" Spencer asked, a smile on his lips.

"Yes, well father raised us to be curious, and since Mister Hotch didn't want us calling him Agent, we called him Mister instead, and Hotchner was a mouthful for the girls. So it became Mister Hotch," Jacob said.

"Is that your son?" Lily asked as she pointed at Jack.

"Yes. That's Jack. You can go and play with him."

"Lily is good at soccer, but I'm not," Angie said.

"And?" Aaron asked. He looked at Jacob, who was shaking his head a little bit.

"Go and play. I bet Jack will have a lot of fun playing with you no matter what." Jacob ushered them both over toward the group before he nodded at Aaron and then followed them.

"I remember that case. It was a man who thought that Angie and Lily were his and not the father's. He was the Godfather to the kids so he would have got custody and he was the one that was pressing the whole murder/suicide thing. Morgan is the one that figured out what was going on while I knew that something was wrong. It was when I figured out what Morgan's strong areas were."

"Those kids seem very happy with everything. How they had to mourn, knowing that their father
would never do what he did but everyone telling that he did."

"It's just as bad as being told that there is no way that a parent could abuse you when you know that it's happening. I didn't see that in their eyes. I saw the fear of losing their only parent left but not a fear of that parent. That's how I knew that nothing was as it seemed. The interviews with friends and family showed a single thing, everything that was bad that was supposed to have happened at the hands of the father came from the actual UnSub. It was all fiction. It was a case of the UnSub hoping that the whole, but he was a normal-seeming person, and no one even thought that there was something wrong. We see so many throughout our job that it can jade some of the locals."

Aaron heard a crack of thunder, and there was lightning just after it.

"The dangerous part of the storm is still miles away," Spencer said.

The heavens let loose, and rain came down, soaking them. Spencer plucked Aaron's phone from his pocket and stuffed it into the cooler that had the remnants of their food. He slid off the table and held out his hand. It was pouring down the rain, and everyone else was running for cover while Spencer was heading more into the open with Aaron in tow. Spencer started to laugh before he spun in a circle with his face turned into the sky. Aaron watched him for a few seconds before joining him.

Aaron let himself get lost in dancing in the rain with Spencer, going from dancing alone to dancing with Spencer, then Jack and everyone else who was around them. It was warm enough to where Jack and the kids weren't going to get sick. The thunder and lightning died down as they played, and then the sun started to shine while the rain came down.

"Let's play!" Jack yelled. Jack tossed the soccer ball at Aaron. "Let's pick teams!"

"Sure," most of the people said around them with the rest nodding their heads.

Aaron stopped and looked at Spencer, who looked happier at that moment than he had in a while. "Sure. Let's play some soccer."

That evening was one of the best that Aaron had in a long time.
Chapter 39

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

There are those Humans who think that Gods don’t affect their life at all. They don’t understand that no matter how small, every single ripple that we make slips into life and changes it. Humans sometimes don’t want to see what their lives are like, they are afraid of judgment, but judgment comes for everyone, at some point or another. They just don’t know when it’s going to happen. That judgment is not always death. There are those that are not served by being killed. They are better served by living with their sins. They are better served by watching what they have done again and again be thrown into their face.

January 2016

Aaron hated that he had to stay back. He was in the mobile command unit that was pulling up seven blocks from Harry & Glenn's Grill and Bar where Spencer was going inside to meet with one of the ring of killers that were after Garcia. JJ, Prentiss, Dave, and Morgan were inside the bar, but Aaron needed to be the eyes that kept an eye on everything. Aaron's hands itched to take a gun and shoot the woman Spencer was meeting in the head. Aaron did not like the plan, but it was a good plan. Aaron didn't like it because it put Spencer at risk.

JJ was in place at the bar, checking her phone like she was waiting on someone. Dave was at a table by himself enjoying an excellent appetizer. Morgan and Prentiss were on the far side of the room where they were on what looked like an auspicious date. Spencer was seated at the table with the bouquet of flowers. It was not a standard set at all, and Spencer had picked them from his rooftop garden. Aaron knew that the two were Orange Mock and Nasturtium. Aaron had laughed as Peaches and Hubert told him what the flowers meant. Deceit and victory in battle. Aaron was not shocked that Spencer was delving into the language of flowers to tell the woman he was meeting about what was in store for her.

Aaron watched as the camera caught a beautiful woman entering the bar. Aaron pointed at the face, and Garcia took a picture and started to run it through every single database that they had access to.

"Spencer?" the woman asked as she stopped at Spencer's table.

"Cat?" Spencer asked. He looked up at her and gave her a very blinding smile. He stood up, and when she stepped in for a hug, he gave it to her. He even leaned in and kissed her cheek. Cat blushed. "You seem nervous."

"Wouldn't you be? That's why I changed the location at the last minute. This one made me feel safer."

"I was glad to change locations."

"I still get so nervous at these," Cat said.

Spencer nodded his head in answer to what she said. Aaron could tell that Spencer didn't believe her, Aaron didn't either. Her body language was all wrong. She thought that she was dealing with someone stupid. Aaron shook his head and looked at the camera that showed just Spencer's face. His signal that something was wrong was a wholly facial tic. It was something that only Aaron would notice at all.
"It's really nice to finally meet you," Cat said.

"It really is."

"So tell me a little about yourself. Do you really have..."

"Yes. Yes, I really do have three Ph.D.s," Spencer said as he reached out for his glass of water and took a sip. It was a nervous tell that Spencer had perfected long before he joined the BAU and it served him well in this instance. Aaron had wondered if Cat would know who he was, and they had a backup plan for that.

Aaron looked at the monitor that was on JJ, and the woman that was down the bar from her caught his attention.

"JJ, that woman on her phone. Get her picture. I want to know who that is. We need to make sure that Cat didn't bring back up." Aaron knew that the profile for her was that she worked alone, but there was still the bomber that was loose. Aaron hoped that with taking Cat down the bomber would be easier to hit.

"You got it, Bossman." Garcia started to type away from the computers she had set up. It was her backup set that had been approved for this operation. It was linked with her other computers back at Quantico but also had the processing power to do what she needed it to do to get the information that the team needed.

"What was your favorite book that you read last year?" Cat asked.

"Honestly, every single book that I read, I love. The words on the page are perfect in the way that the author intended. They are each a work of art."

"Tell me about your wife," Cat asked next.

Spencer reached out and straightened the silverware on the napkin. He looked nervous.

"I'd rather not talk about her," Spencer said, and he laced anger into his tone, but it wasn't directed at Cat.

Aaron saw Cat jump on that emotion.

"Might as well get it out in the open, right? That's why we're here." Cat looked like she was playing a game with Spencer, and Aaron knew that she was. She was going to kill him. It was what they had set up on that. It's why they chose what they did as Spencer's cover. Aaron knew that Spencer could do it even though others thought that he was going to mess up.

"How long have you been married? When is she due to give birth?" Cat looked like she was enjoying what she was doing.

Spencer cleared his throat his hand going back to the silverware on the table. "Uh..four years and a couple of- a couple of months on when she is due. Should we talk about price now, or..." Spencer paused and looked at Cat.

"Slow down, tiger. What exactly are we negotiating here?"

"You know."

"I want to hear you say it."
Spencer's next words were whispered, but even the mics picked them up. "To have her killed."

"Let me see your ring." Cat held out her hand, and Spencer laid his down into hers. She made a show of looking at the ring. Aaron looked at it, as well. It was very much faded and dinged, just about four years worth. Aaron was happy that Spencer had caught that part of the whole operation. The other ring had been new, which wouldn't have worked. Aaron hadn't even thought about that. The whole Hitmen ring was good at what they did.

"You know what that is? A noose. Only it doesn't kill you all at once. It kills you slowly, day by day. You ever feel that way?"

"I feel that way all the time." Spencer acted like it was a relief to say those words. Like it took a weight off of his shoulders.

"Take it off."

"Why?" Spencer's shocked and affronted face was perfect.

"As a sign of your commitment."

"To me."

"If she sticks to the pattern, she'll take him to a secondary location and kill him," Aaron said over the comms. He tuned out the talking from the rest of the team about their acknowledgment as well as Morgan's comment about not letting it get that far.

Morgan had a significant stake in this game because Garcia had been hurt the most. It was her twelve search bots that were the Dirty Dozen that the Hitmen had been targeting. Garcia that they had been targeting which Morgan took personally. Aaron wasn't shocked at that. Aaron was pretty sure that Morgan was closer to Garcia than he was his own sisters, and Morgan was damned close to his sisters.

"Your hands are soft, but this ring is dinged."

"I do the cooking, and I bang it off the pans in the sink when I wash up."

"Your wife doesn't cook and clean?"

"No," Spencer said. He reached out with his hand to take a drink of water.

"Why?"

"She refuses so on the weekends I prepare meals for the beginning of the week and then again on Wednesday."

"What does she do for work?"

"She works at a local doctor's office as the nursing staff manager."

"So she's a nurse?"

"Yes, she was at a hospital, but she moved to the doctor's office."

"So why do you want her dead?" Cat asked. She propped her head up on her palm like she was listening to a terrific story.
"For one, I don't want kids."

"And killing her and the kid is the way to go about that?"

"Also, I know the kid is not mine."

Aaron wondered what Spencer was doing because this was deviating from the narrative that the team had agreed upon. Aaron hoped that Spencer hadn't fucked them over. It was rare for him to do something like this.

"You are married. How can you be sure? I mean, do you use condoms?"

"No, we don't, but I had a vasectomy when I was younger to stop myself from having kids as I really like sex and didn't want the burden of having other forms of birth control fail. Even being careful, there is a chance that the pill won't work. I don't share it with anyone, and I think that my wife has forgotten that I told her that. I got tested after she told me she was pregnant. I still am not shooting sperm at all. I gave three different samples across several weeks, sometimes right after sex, and sometimes after we had not had sex in a few days. I was the same across all."

"She's cheating on you?" Cat asked.

"I can only assume, or she went behind my back to a fertility place to get pregnant. She told me she didn't want kids when we got together. I guess that something has changed."

Aaron watched the emotions on Cat's face as she took that in. Aaron saw the second that she decided that she was going to stick to the plan to kill Spencer as well, probably even the wife. Aaron snorted at that. Garcia looked up at him with a little bit of shock on her face. Spencer moved his hand under the table, and then everyone over comms heard a very distinct click.

"What was that? Was that what I think it was?" Garcia asked.

"Everybody hold," Aaron said. He did not want Spencer getting shot.

"Why are we here, Spencer?" Cat asked.

"Because you targeted a friend of mine. Penelope Garcia. She's lived in fear of her life for months because you didn't like the fact that someone had caught onto you. Mainly my team."

"Your team being the behavioral analysis unit of the FBI? You guys are good. You're the only ones that got this close to us." Cat looked very smug.

Spencer looked smug back. He looked over at where the woman at the bar was setting down her phone. She held her hands up. Aaron frowned because he had no clue what was going on. "Do you want to know something entertaining?"

"What?" Cat asked. She looked a little unsure at the moment, it was a strange look for her face.

Spencer raised up his two hands, Aaron hadn't even noticed that he had slipped his second under the table. One hand was empty, and the other had his phone. "I have a friend who has some really awesome tech. I knew that there was the possibility that you would bring the bomber with you. You hate men, there is a reason you kill them the most. And you live off of the fact that no one looks for a woman as a hitman. You use the gender bias that exists to slip under the radar. I figured out who you were, and I have spent a little while trying to find your father. That's neither here nor there."

"You found him?"
"No, but you might want to look at your friend." Spencer looked at where the woman at the bar had her hands on her head. "I figured out her phone number and hacked it to where the only thing that she could do was message me. So the question is, Cat, how much research into my team did you do?"

"I left that to the others. Though I do remember, you looking a lot different in your image."

"I was younger looking then, I mean I was still very green. So you have two options. You can give up quietly like your friend, or we can do this the hard way."

There was the click of the gun but no sound of the bullet. Cat looked shocked, she drew the gun up out from under the table. Aaron saw that the safety was on it.

"Hard way it is," Spencer said. He moved, and then Cat jerked in her seat, and a look of utter pain came across her face. Spencer was up and moving to handcuff her before he turned to look at Dave and nodded at him. He looked at Morgan next and shook his head toward the woman at the bar. Morgan and JJ moved to her. JJ grabbed the phone and looked down at it before she looked at Spencer.

"That's no way a gentleman treats a woman," Cat said.

"I'm no fucking gentleman, Cat. I'm a God, and I'm quite fine with kicking a killer in the crotch if it means that they are not going to hurt anyone else." Spencer shoved Cat toward Dave and turned to look at the woman at the bar. He shook his head a little, and she looked chagrined. "We need a New God containment squad here. If you move at all, I'll fucking kill you."

"Yes, Sir," the woman at the bar said.

"Reid, what's going on?" Morgan asked.

"So with the explosion of the Atom Bomb, there was a new breed of God born. Sharon Mayford here is one of them. She was one of the ladies who was there when it was tested. Her obsession with bombs was born. Though up until a few years ago, she was working for Interpol is getting rid of bombs instead of setting them. I would love to know what happened, but now is not the time. You will take Agent Morgan through the tunnels and get rid of the bombs that are set around this block."

"Yes, Sir," Sharon said. Her head was bowed.

Morgan took her toward the back of the place, and part of SWAT met him at the door.

"You are pretty smart for a New God and well connected."

"I have made a lot of friends in my time at the FBI. Rossi, take her out of my sight please." Spencer picked up the ring from the table and dropped it into the inside pocket on his jacket that he was wearing. He looked at up the camera where Aaron was watching him.

"It's over?" Garcia asked.

Aaron looked away from the TV screen and looked at Garcia. He gave her a smile and laid a hand on her shoulder. Today was the first time she had left the office building, and she had been wearing a vest when Aaron had escorted her to the mobile command center. Aaron had thought that having her stay at Quantico was the best option, but after a few minutes talking to Spencer and Morgan, it was decided that a mobile command center was going to be better. Aaron thought that it was given how much the operation changed with Spencer just knowing Sharon Mayford from sight alone.
"Let's go," Aaron said to Garcia, and he helped her to stand up and tucked her arm into his as they walked out of the command center and started to the SUV that was outside. Anderson was in the driver's seat, so Aaron got into the back with Garcia. "To the bar."

"Yes, Sir."

The drive was silent, Garcia still processing what she was now allowed to do. Which was everything and anything that she wanted. Aaron was still going to have her talk to a therapist, but he figured that Morgan would make sure that she was okay.

Spencer was waiting outside of the bar talking with someone while there was still the armored prisoner transport that had to have Cat in it. Spencer was on his phone. Dave was behind him, looking at him.

"So what exactly has Jackson put on your phone?" Aaron asked.

"Oh, I asked him for a bit of tech that he's developing for the CIA and NSA at the moment. I read about it in the secure briefing in John's office. I was read in on it as I was used to give some info on Gods for it. It's really nice. As soon as she texted Cat when I was at the table with her, I was able to lock onto her. Also, that gun that Cat had won't work anymore. I turned on the safety and fused the metal of the pin to the casing. I got good at that a long time ago. I just have to touch the gun to be able to do it. It's like a modified version of smiting for guns. Cat didn't even know that I had done it until she tried to fire."

"That was risky," Aaron said.

"The gun bit? Not really. The changing the script, yes but I wanted to see exactly how much of a man hater she was. If she still wanted to kill me after that, then it meant that she had made a choice to do it before I had even sat down."

"Did you find her father?" Morgan asked as stepped up to the transport vehicle to shove Sharon inside of it.

"I'm sorry," Sharon said as she looked at Spencer.

"You keep your mouth shut and everything will be good. I'm a little shocked that you even took this on knowing who you were going after."

"I didn't think that you would step in and then I hoped that you would not see me."

"Yes, well, I saw you. I felt you. Plus when you texted Cat, you used a code word that I remember from a briefing about Gods. You gave yourself away with that and then it was just looking for you."

The agents who were doing the transfer stepped around. Spencer nodded at the two of them.

"Agent Reid, do we need to have someone ride in the back?"

"Yes, two people. One for each prisoner."

"We have a four-man squad so that will be fine." The two men climbed into the back and shut the doors.

Aaron heard the locks slam shut and now they could only be opened from the inside with codes. Aaron had been the one to request modified transport.
"We need to debrief," Aaron said. He looked at his team. They all looked tired. It was more than just being tired from this day. There was a lot more to it than that. This was months and months of tracking the Hitmen once they had figured out from Montolo that they were after Garcia. This was a tiredness that was from running for too long as well as working other cases. This was finding corruption in the ranks and not liking it.

"Can we do that tomorrow?" Morgan asked. His eyes were on Garcia.

"Yes. Let's get this place cleaned up and then go from there." Aaron knew that they had a little while before he could leave, but he could get Morgan and Garcia out of there.

"Bomb squad is working on getting rid of the bombs," JJ said.

"Good. I'm sure I'll have that report in the morning. Morgan, you go ahead and take Garcia home."

"Not home," Garcia said with a grin and a wink. "Savannah is expecting me, and she has good stuff."

"Let's go, Mama," Morgan said, wrapping his arm around Garcia's shoulder and directing her away from it all.

"It's over," Dave said.

"Yeah, I knew we would take down Cat tonight, but the bomber is just like...relief. It's all over in one fell swoop."

Aaron looked at Spencer after nodding at Prentiss's words, but Spencer was not where he had been. In fact, when Aaron looked around for him, he couldn't see him anywhere. "Where did Spencer go?"

"Hotch," Anderson said getting Aaron's attention from where he was still near the SUV. Aaron turned to look at him. "He went into the woods over here." Anderson was pointing to a little path that Aaron could see. Aaron saw that it looked pretty used.

"You got this, Dave?" Aaron asked.

"Yes," Dave answered back pretty quickly.

It was unlike Spencer to disappear like that anymore. Every single time that he needed space after something, he told Aaron. Aaron started toward the woods, and it was ten feet in that Aaron smelled Spencer's cigarettes. Aaron followed that scent in the winding paths to find that Spencer was sitting on top of a rock in the middle of a clearing. He was looking up at the sky. Aaron looked up as well and saw that the clearing was straight up like it was formed by the hand of man instead of by nature.

"Do you want me here?"

"I just need to think," Spencer said. He laid back, his head falling down the rock and he was looking at Aaron upside down.

"What about?"

"The fact that so many New Gods are turning to crime. It's strange given that the Old Gods never really did it. I wonder if it has to do with the fact that you all don't need worship, so you don't have that Human connection like we do. It's something I'll have to talk to the other Gods about, and we can check."
"Or it's that there are so many of us that are spread too thin and stuff that we don't have that connection." Aaron hadn't thought much about any of it at all. He really hadn't, but Spencer had a point. "So how bad could this have gone?"

"Well, since Sharon didn't blow everything up a soon as I walked in, I knew that she wasn't going to unless she was forced. I was glad for Jackson's tech, which he's happy that it worked. Very happy." Spencer held up his phone, waving it back and forth. Aaron stepped up and took the phone from his hand and slipped it into his back pocket. He caught Spencer's face in his hands, it felt weird with Spencer being upside down. "Are we really going to do a Spider-man kiss right now."

"Yes," Aaron said. He pressed his lips to Spencer's gently, Spencer was at the perfect height. Aaron pulled back with a smile. "So what is this place?"

"Just a random place where humans have settled. The tree thing is someone keeping them trimmed back, so I am sure that something happens here, but it's not Gods. Garcia is thrilled. She's going to get drunk tonight you know that right?"

"She's going to be with Morgan and Savannah, I trust that she'll be fine. Morgan isn't going to allow anyone to hurt her."

"They are all too cocky to have any backup plans in place. They really thought they were going to win. So we are good now. Good to move on with our lives."

"The flowers were nice. Too bad they are just going to rot."

"Eh, someone will enjoy them. I had one of the techs cleaning up the cameras toss them onto the ground outside. Some creature will slip out and eat them. Go back and do what you have to do. When I'm settled again, I'll join you. Don't think I'm going to sleep tonight and I think I want air so I'll probably go to the roof."

"That's fine. Jessica has Jack at her place since we were not sure how long this would take. So that's one thing we don't have to do tonight. She's going to call when he's awake. He wants breakfast out." Aaron hadn't talked to Spencer much about those plans as Spencer had been getting ready for the sting tonight. Aaron hadn't wanted to distract him.

"She texted me about something, so I asked when we were going to pick him up. Jessica laughed at you and I having our wires crossed as she called it. Still, it'll be nice to not have Stormy around."

"Stormy went with Jack?" Aaron asked. He had no clue how they were going to go to breakfast with Jack if the dragon was around. Aaron had already planned where he wanted to eat, but they were not God friendly, not creatures likes that at least. Still, Aaron wondered if he could get Stormy to stay in the car.

"Yes, Jessica is going to take her to our place after we pick up Jack. She has to go get her hair done at a place not too far from our place, so it's not going to be out of her way. Stormy will be fine until Jack gets home."

"Good. Good." Aaron leaned down for another quick kiss. "You did well today."

"It's all about not showing them that you are scared, even if you are, which I wasn't, but the thought process is the exact same. She's pretty simple to figure out. She was hurt by a man, so she takes it out on all men. Her only formative relationships are with other females. I'm actually quite shocked that she allowed herself to work with other men. She's pretty hateful of men at all."

"Needs must, and I'm sure that she thought she would kill them one day. I can see her doing the
scorched earth policy thing with people that she worked with."

"I agree. She's going to be a fascinating study. I know a lady who does that kind of stuff. I'll contact her to see if she wants to study Cat. Go before I decide that something else is more appropriate for doing than working," Spence said with a wicked grin on his face. He looked Aaron up and down, which still looked weird with Spencer's head hanging down the rock.

"I'll go, but you have to promise me that you'll head in when you are calm. Don't wander off."

"I won't. I promise. I'm going to stay here until I smoke at least three more cigarettes and then I'll join up with the team again."

Aaron knew that he would do it. Spencer was good at making sure that Aaron didn't worry about him in situations where Aaron didn't need to worry about him. Aaron knew that Spencer was older and more powerful than him, but Spencer was on his team, and that made him Aaron's to worry about. It was strange, but it was the way that it was.

There was just this feeling that it wasn't over yet. That whatever had been looking wasn't over and this was just the beginning of it all.
Chapter 40

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Children change you, and you cannot anticipate the changes that having a child will make on you. From the moment that a child is known to have been conceived, there is a difference to the basis of who that person is. They have gone from a lover, or a husband/wife, or a stranger, to father or a mother. They are different in a fundamental way. Sometimes those changes are good others they are not good.

Those who allow anger to enter, they are not ready to be a father or a mother. There are a lot of humans who are ready to be mothers or fathers, but they are not allowed the choice, other Humans think that they can control others. They think that they can change who someone is inside by forcing them to do something that they don't want to do. Which in any other case is a crime.

Then there are those who find that they are ready for being a parent even if before they didn't think that they were. Their whole life becomes about that child. Their whole life now revolves around a sack of cells inside of a body. They are the ones that do good at raising a child. They want a child so much but never knew it.

July 2016

Aaron looked at Spencer. He wanted to be pissed at Spencer. He wanted to be pissed at his whole team, but right now the anger he had was for Montolo.

There was little to be done but wait to hear word on how Savannah came out of surgery and how she and the child were doing. Morgan was being debriefed by Dave while Aaron waited to hear about how mother and child were doing. Morgan wanted to get it all done before he went into the room with his wife and child.

Morgan might have not wanted a child at the time that Savannah figured out what she was pregnant, but he had adapted well to being a father. He had adapted well to being a husband as well. Aaron knew that they were going to make it. There was a harmony between them. Something that had never been there between Aaron and Haley. Something that had never been there between Dave and his wives. Savannah accepted Morgan for who he was.

"Hotch," Morgan said as he stepped up to him.

Aaron could read the words in his eyes. So Aaron laid a hand on his shoulder and walked him down to the room that his son was in.

It was hours later that Aaron was ready to leave the hospital. Savannah was awake, and she and her husband were visiting with their son. Aaron wanted to go home and hug and kiss his son. He looked for Spencer, but Spencer wasn't where Aaron had left him. Aaron knew that he had not left the hospital as Aaron still had the car keys on him. Aaron passed a nurse who smelled of regular cigarette smoke.

"Excuse me, is there a place I can-" Aaron mimed smoking.

"Yeah, a floor up there is a small roof that's above a unit that can't have things above it. That's where most of us go. The door is unlocked." She gave Aaron a smile and turned to go the way that she had
been going before. Aaron turned in the direction that she talked about and found the stairs that took him up a floor. It wasn't hard to miss the doorway as it had a sign that proclaimed it was not an exit. He easily pushed open the door, and he found Spencer sitting on the edge of the roof with his cigarette case beside him and his legs hanging over the side.

"So, Morgan and family are settled. I thought maybe it was time for us to go home." Aaron walked across the roof and settled in at Spencer's side. Aaron sat down beside Spencer but facing a different direction.

"To see Jack?" Spencer asked. He turned his head to the side and looked at Aaron. He had a cigarette in his hand, but he wasn't smoking it. Looking at the burn pattern, Aaron was pretty sure that he hadn't taken a puff of it at all. Aaron reached out and took the cigarette from slack fingers and put it out in the ashtray that was on his other side.

"Yeah, to see Jack. And to talk."

"I won't take back what I did. I knew that he was the best option for figuring out what that note meant. I am also not going to apologize for putting a tracker on him."

"You went against my expressed orders."

"Yes, and no matter our relationship status, I would have done the same thing. He was the best option, and all you could see was Foyet coming after you and him getting the drop on you. Yes, Morgan was too close, but it was that closeness that allowed him to know what he had to do."

"You followed him, and you didn't tell anyone."

"And I would have done the same thing again, no matter what. It allowed us to figure out who the nurse was that was on Montolo's payroll. It allowed us to make sure that mother and baby were safe. It was because of us that Montolo made sure that he had someone inside of the hospital, Aaron. It was because of us that he laid the trap that he did for Morgan. If we had been all human, I don't know what the man would have done. He's from an area where they still have a deep worship of the Old Gods. They might not worship the New Gods, but there is a reverence to them, and he would have never harmed me. Even when I was holding a gun to his head, he never resisted. He wasn't going to do that, so I knew that I was the only one that could walk into that place he wouldn't do a thing to me. I was the only option for breaching that place without someone dying."

"You still should have waited for backup," Aaron said.

"And you need to trust that I'm not going to do something stupid. I don't stop you from going into a house. I don't stop you from doing your job."

"There was a threat against your life."

"Yes, I tried to explain it to you that I was not in danger. That man would never have actually harmed a single hair on my head, but no, you decided that I was being reckless with my life. You don't understand what I went through, Ar. You don't know what it was like living day after day because I knew that if I didn't, you would be disappointed in me. I nearly gave up time and time again, but it, your love for me that kept me going. It took four hundred years, thirty-eight weeks, two days, and ten hours for me to wake up without the thought that you were still alive. I was crushed every morning when I remembered that you were dead. I didn't do a lot of living in those years, but I was alive, and that was about as good as it got. I will do my fucking damnedest to get back to you every single day, and I would never do a thing that would jeopardize that. Yet you don't trust me to do that for some reason. I don't know if me getting shot in the neck is what did it, but I was never in
danger of dying at that point. I could have healed on my own, but I was acting human, so I let them do what they felt they needed to do, and it was what helped us solve that case." Spencer stood up, grabbing his cigarette case. "I'm going home."

He was gone in that next instant, and Aaron was left staring at the wall where he had been. Aaron stood up a while later, and he knew precisely what Spencer was talking about because Aaron had been keeping Spencer back on cases. Not letting him take part in the dangerous parts.

"Hey, wanna come and see my little man?" Morgan asked.

Aaron turned his head to see Morgan standing in the doorway.

"How did you find me?"

"When Reid is pissed, he goes and smokes. He's done it since the start of him being on the team, so it was just a matter of finding the closest roof to get on. I just really lucked out it wasn't the highest roof. Come and look and say goodbye for now and then go home and calm down your lover because you know you never protected him this much when he was still thought to be what everyone thinks he is and when he was still fresh from the Academy. I don't think you have allowed him to go on a breach since he and Prentiss rescued me when I was taken. He didn't ask you if he was allowed to go on that either and you've been giving him the silent treatment since then pretty much. You had to make an adjustment, but you chose to protect instead of support."

"I know." Aaron closed his eyes and took a deep breath. Spencer had been there when Morgan had been taken, and they had been ready for that fact. Spencer had been getting a ride home with Morgan that night after Aaron had gone home early because jack was sick. Savannah had heard them knock out Spencer and take Morgan. The men had been prepared for Spencer with a gas that worked on all Gods. Aaron hadn't even questioned why they would have gone for it except it seemed that Montolo had been prepared in all ways to take out the man who he blamed for the death of a son.

Aaron had spent months worried about Spencer as well as Morgan because all he could think was that the person at that point was going after the both of them. It had taken two weeks to figure out that the target had only been Morgan. Still, Aaron feared for Spencer's life, and he had been treating Spencer like a child. Aaron followed Morgan to the room where the unnamed boy would spend the next few weeks. Aaron knew that Morgan was going to be a good father, even if he knew that it was this act that was going to take Morgan from the team.

That thought had Aaron a little scared because he had no clue who he wanted to replace Morgan. The last time that someone had been replaced on the team was when Elle had left, and Prentiss had been put on the team without Aaron's input. Aaron wondered how Spencer was going to take that. Aaron smiled down at the little boy and grinned as his finger was grabbed. They talked around the issue of Morgan leaving, but that could be dealt with when emotions were less.

"Go home, Hotch. Hug your kid. Make up to your lover for being a bear for over six months." Morgan grinned at Aaron.

Aaron had a box of sushi in his hand. It was more than Aaron would typically buy, but he had called in the order at a twenty-four-hour place that Spencer liked to go to in the middle of the night. Aaron pushed the box into the fridge until he could find Spencer. He wasn't in the library or the office and wasn't visible on the first floor. Aaron went up the stairs that would allow him to check on Jack on his way to the master bedroom. He found that Jack was dead asleep with stormy laying along his body. Jack was getting big, and Aaron had to wonder if he was going to take after Aaron or Haley in the height department. He ate like he was a growing weed and Aaron hoped it meant he would grow
to be big. Though if he were short, it would be fine. He could play soccer either way.

Aaron walked to the door, shutting it and locking it while also setting the alarm. Spencer had to be on the roof. Aaron stopped when he got to the doorway because he wasn't sure what he was going to say. He wasn't sure what he could say. He had been treating Spencer like a child for over half of a year.

"He's not here," Peaches said when Aaron finally stepped out onto the roof.

Aaron looked around, not because he didn't believe Peaches but because he had no clue where Spencer was if he wasn't on the roof. Aaron knew that he had come home. Aaron had found evidence of him being there. He might have left by his weird teleportation, but he had grabbed his things before fully leaving the hospital. His gun was in the safe. Aaron had checked that while in the bedroom.

"Where is he?"

"He went on a walk. I don't know where he went."

"Thanks. Keep an eye on Jack?" Aaron asked.

"Ri's got him. Big things happened. He only drinks when big things happen."

Aaron nodded at Peaches's words and then left the roof. He walked down the stairs and back into the apartment, turning off the alarm because he would be leaving soon. He walked to the drink cabinet and opened it with the key that was up where Jack couldn't reach. He found that none of the glasses had been used, but the level in Spencer's liquor that would be him drunk was a lot lower than it had been. It was pretty damned close to where it should be if Spencer had left the apartment half drunk. Aaron sighed and shut the cabinet, locking it and putting the key up. He went back to the bedroom and changed. It was warm out so he put on a pair of linen pants that were pretty sturdy but would keep him cool and a T-shirt. Aaron pocketed his credentials as well as his wallet but didn't put on a single weapon. He was weapon enough where he was going.

Spencer was not at the club. The bouncer had no reason to lie to Aaron, and even as Aaron stood outside of the club, he couldn't feel Spencer. He had felt him in that rough direction, but as he had got closer, he had felt that location change, still, he wanted to check the club. Aaron sighed and nodded his thanks before turning the direction that he felt Spencer being in. He kept on walking, looking around for anything that was hidden that he couldn't see without concentrating. He stopped outside of a set of stairs that led down into an underground level bar. While the direction that Spencer felt like he was in was different, Aaron felt the pull to go down there. He backed up to go around the handrail and started down the stairs. He found that it was indeed an underground bar. It was human, though. Aaron felt nothing even remotely Godlike from any of the patrons. The bartender though pointed at a door that said authorized access only. Aaron laid his hand on the doorknob and turned it. The door opened, and he was greeted with another set of stairs that went down. Aaron followed that tunnel, and he realized that he had turned enough that he felt that Spencer was somewhere ahead of him. He opened the last door in the tunnel and was greeted with a bar that seemed familiar to his memories, which was strange given that he knew he had never been there before.

Aaron found that the bar was hazy. Like he wasn't seeing it all quite right. He frowned and walked up to the bar before turning and looking around the room. He knew that it was bigger than what he was seeing, but he just couldn't see anything. Aaron could barely breathe, it felt like the air was thin in the bar.

"What do you want?" the bartender asked.
Aaron tried to pinpoint who the hell the God was. There was a drink set down in front of Aaron, and the bartender looked down at it and then up at Aaron. Aaron reached out and took a drink of it, and when he did, he waited to see what happened, but nothing did. He even looked around and couldn't see anything.

"What do you want?" the bartender repeated.

"I'm looking for my lover."

"Well, if he's here and you can't see him, I think that means he doesn't want to see you. So drink your drink and leave."

"No," Aaron said.

"No one stays at the bar so find a seat at a table, or I will throw your ass out." The bartender glared at Aaron and then took a step back. He glared, and Aaron did as he said. Aaron picked up his drink and walked into the darkness. As he got deeper into it, he found that he was pushed to a table. Probably an empty one. Aaron looked around and saw that there was only darkness, except for the path to the bar. Whatever this place was, Aaron was pretty sure it was damned old.

Aaron touched the edge of the table he was at and found that the wood was old. It looked like it was held together with magic or just pure Godness. He touched a deep gouge in the wood, and he felt the magic in the wood. Even the booth he was sitting in was just wood. Aaron looked around the bar part and saw that it was all old as well. Aaron wondered how long this place had been in existence. Spencer's stories in his memoirs were full of things that were totally hidden from Humans and had been since they were formed.

The door opened, and Aaron felt someone enter, but all he saw was a shady figure walking to the bar and then to a table, and as soon as the person got close to the darkness, they disappeared. Aaron sipped as his drink and tried to feel for Spencer better in the bar, but he only felt him everywhere. Like the bar itself was hiding him.

When Aaron was done with his drink, he got up and went back to the bar to get another drink. He looked at the bartender and what the man had stocked up. Aaron saw that there were things that he didn't recognize at all.

"Do you know who I am?"

"I do. Though I will say that I don't know how you found this place. New Gods aren't supposed to be able to find it."

"No, I mean..." Aaron frowned as a drink was set down in front of him. He hadn't seen the bartender making it. Then Aaron realized that there were Pixies down below the bar and they were making drinks. The bartender handed one of them something, and they rushed over to a blender and poured some of it into it. When there were a few more things added the bartender out a lid on it and pressed the button to start it up. There was no noise, but the blades were spinning.

Aaron picked up his new drink, it smelled like fruit and something else. Nothing terrible, just different. He took a sip and the taste on his tongue was good, it was like coming home.

"Yeah, I know exactly who you are. He's here, but he wants to be alone, and I think that him sleeping off the drink that he had before he got here is the best idea. He was trashed, and I've never seen him that way, not since you died. So I know exactly who you are and what you like, so sit down until he decides that he wants to see your face. When he's like this, there is little that will make
him do what he doesn't want to, and I don't want a fight on my hands. He could rip this place apart. So go sit."

Aaron picked up his drink and walked back over to his table. He sipped at it, finding a craving in his body that he never knew he had being quenched.

"You just can't leave me alone, can you?" Spencer asked, and he leaned forward in the seat on the other side of the table. He had a bottle of water in his hand, and he looked like shit.

"Spencer."

"No. You don't get to just wave your hand and say you are sorry because you realize how much of a child you have been treating me. I kept on waiting. I kept on hoping you would see what you were doing and check your reaction to the thing. You didn't, though. I had to point it out to you. I get you are afraid of losing me, but Aaron, I did lose you, and I have never stopped you from doing your job. I have only once acted in a way that stopped you from doing something, and that was the night that I took the gunshot that was meant to kill you before you became a New God. I have waged war in the shadows against my own kind to make sure that no one is going to touch you. I lost you once, and it nearly killed me. I nearly wasted away in the grief, and humanity suffered with me. I would wage war on the world for you, but I would never take your agency away from you. I walked a thin line when I was hiding as a New God to make sure that I didn't lie any more than I had to about who I was. I think that it is when Morgan started to figure out that I was more than he thought. So, Aaron tell me, how did you protecting me work out? How many times in your eyes did you save my life? Was it worth it?" Spencer sat back too hard, too fast. His head cracked off the bench wall behind him, but he didn't even notice it, it seemed.

Aaron realized that he was drunk. He was skunk drunk. Aaron knew that he had not drunk enough at the apartment get drunk, so that meant that he had to have drunk somewhere else. He could have drunk at the bar they were at, but the words the bartender said meant that Aaron didn't think that was the case.

"I could say that I forgot you are a God, but that would be a lie. I could say that I was worried about the fact that you would do what you did that day again, jump in front of a bullet for me, but that would be a lie as well. I was scared, and I was taking it out on you, and there was nothing more than that. I was scared and instead of talking I just...well I became a caveman I think."

Spencer laughed. He lifted up the water bottle and took a long drink of it. Aaron frowned because he wasn't sure what was in that bottle, but he was sure that it was not water. When Spencer was done drinking, there was about a third of the bottle left. He reached out his hand and snagged it from him. Spencer grinned but didn't try and get it back. He just stared at Aaron as he took a sniff of the drink. It smelled like nothing. Aaron tipped the drink back and let just a few drops drop onto his tongue. Aaron coughed as it burned. It fucking burned deep inside of him, and he hadn't even swallowed anything. It felt like liquid fire in his veins.

"What the hell is this shit?"

"Well it's had a lot of names since it was first made, but the newest name for it is Grecian Fire. After surviving Grecian Fire one of the young New Gods of the era called it that after I gave it to him. Pixies make this now. It used to just be made by the Gods, but the Pixies make it sweeter, and that's kind of nice."

"Sweeter?" Aaron looked down at the bottle in his hand and set it down. "How in the fuck is that sweeter?"
"You didn't drink it back when it was made by me or the Gods that followed, protecting the still that I first made."

"You invented the still?"

"Of course, I am the God of Knowledge, I found knowledge, I give knowledge. I make it available. Sometimes that means me creating things to spread that knowledge. I created what is now called alcohol. I did it by experimenting, but I did make it. Some call this rotgut, but I call it a good way to get plastered without having to drink a lot. I don't have to drink much more than two bottles of this, plus what I have already drunk at home. I don't want to be awake right now."

"How about we go home and you can not be awake there?"

"Home. It's the first place that has felt like home in a long time. I feel like it's slipping away, though. You used to trust me. You used to trust me a great deal more than you do now. Before you found out who you were in a past life. Even after you found that out. You trusted my judgment. You trusted me to go into a room and not get killed. Now you are afraid that I will get killed. I've sat down with killers across the table from me several times. I'll do it more times. I don't care about if you forbid me from doing it. I'll move teams. I'll go to Garrett's team. Then I will be gone more than you. I'm good at this job. I'm better at this job than any other job I've ever done in my long life. I won't be run off of it because you think that you need to protect me. So stop stopping me from going out into the field, or I'm taking the choice out of your hands."

"I will." Aaron reached out and took the bottle from Spencer's hand and tugged at him. He came around the table, scooting into the seat with Aaron and when Aaron pushed at the table, it moved to allow Spencer to settle across Aaron's thighs. Aaron cupped the sides of his face and pulled him in for a kiss. "I promise. I just...there was something there that I knew that was coming. There was something horrible, and it was looming, and I thought it was coming for you, but as soon as you had taken down Montolo with Morgan, it went away."

Spencer was looking at Aaron with a very strange look on his face. If this were a much less serious moment, Aaron would laugh because Spencer trying to get his brain to focus while it was muddled with alcohol was kind of funny.

"You didn't tell me. You can't not tell me these things, Aaron. I can't help you, I can't teach you without knowing everything."

"Excuse me," the bartender said, and he set down on the edge of the table a glass that looked like it had mud in it, it was the color and looked to be the same texture. Aaron watched as Spencer picked it up and drank it, not breathing. He chugged that drink down, and Aaron had to wonder what it was. Aaron was also not shocked that Spencer took off running to the bathroom, or what he assumed was the bathroom. Aaron followed behind him and listened to him throw up. Aaron opened the stall door to the bathroom and found that Spencer was throwing up all right, but it wasn't like normal. There was a blue mist rising off of what he had thrown up into the toilet. Aaron would ask, just not right now. He would ask later.

Aaron crouched for a second before sitting down behind Spencer. Spencer had been the strong one, the sure one, and he didn't like the unsure person that Aaron's doubt in him had caused. Aaron hadn't meant it to be that. He just wanted to protect him. Aaron could see how what the cost of that protection was. The cost was doubt. Aaron didn't doubt that Spencer would do everything in his power to always come back to him. The only thing that Aaron doubted was that the world wanted them to be together. Aaron knew that he could do little to stop if the magic that created Gods wanted to take Spencer or even himself back into their embrace. Aaron would fight it with every single little bit of his being.
"How many times do you think I have lived?" Aaron asked when Spencer hadn't thrown up in over a minute.

"What?" Spencer asked. He turned his head to look at Aaron.

"There is a group of Old Gods that run around and kill Humans who are turning into New Gods. This isn't new, not with what I have read of your unedited manuscripts that you haven't sent to your publisher. I've been thinking a while that I've been born again, but you never found me, never saved me. That shot would have gone through my head, Spencer. I would have died a Human."

"I came to Virginia the first time when you were younger. I didn't realize, didn't put faces to names until much later."

"When you killed my father for what he did to Mom and me."

"It wasn't the first time I was drawn to Virginia, but you would have been just born the first time. I came I visited, but the urge didn't go away. I was drawn over and over to Virginia, but it wasn't until Gideon that I felt like it was the right time. I've felt that three other times in my long life. I always went there, but the urge didn't go away until one day it did. Once it happened while I was there." Spencer had a look on his face that said he was thinking. Aaron noticed that he didn't seem drunk anymore. Aaron wondered what was in that drink that Spencer had been given by the bartender if it sobered him up that quick, just by puking. "I never thought about it. There was a young man who died by poison. He had to have ingested it. It was looked into and deemed that a jealous ex-lover had done it. He was due to be married the next day. You think that was you?"

"I don't know. What was used to kill him?"

"It's one of the few poisons that work on New Gods and Humans. It doesn't work on Old Gods. So it would have killed him if he had turned into a New God. You mean I was so close the whole time?"

"We can't know that for certain, and I don't plan to experiment to find out. Do you?"

"No. Fuck my head hurts. I hate that shit, but I was too drunk to think any of this through. Take me home?"

"Sure," Aaron said. He stood up, pulling Spencer with him. He found that Spencer was steady on his feet, but he looked a little worse for the wear. The bar was close enough that Aaron and Spencer could walk but just far enough away where Aaron didn't want to.

The cab was easy to find. The trip home was quick, and Spencer wasn't asleep in the back of the cab, even if he wasn't talking. Spencer stripped naked with little issue in the bedroom. Aaron checked on Jack and on Jessica. They were both dead asleep. Aaron walked back into the bedroom. Spencer was in the middle of the bed with the blankets not over his body at all, they were shoved down like he had kicked them off, he was also naked. Aaron got stripped fast, putting up his clothes and Spencer's where they went. He got into bed and pulled the blankets up over them both. Spencer rolled over before Aaron could cuddle into him. Spencer laid his head over Aaron's heart and just laid there. Aaron knew that Spencer wasn't asleep and Aaron knew that Aaron wasn't asleep, but still they laid there like that all night long. Aaron relishing having Spencer in his arms and Spencer listening to the beat of Aaron's heart. Aaron knew that they were not done talking about what had been going on over the past six months, but for now, everything was in the open, and they were talking, that was enough.
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Aaron looked at Spencer. They were not on the jet because the case had been too close for that and they had moved around enough that Aaron was glad that they had not tried to fly to where they were going. The whole of the team needed to calm down a little, and the drive home was going to be the best at that. Spencer was in the middle of the back seat of the SUV, and he was staring at the back of the head of the newest member to the team. Kate Callahan was on her first case with the team, and it showed in the way that the team was fumbling around a little. It had taken a while, and there were a lot of people who could have worked on the team, but there was something about Callahan that called to Aaron. The first was that she wasn't scared of him. Which some of the other candidates had been.

It had been so long since Aaron had interviewed anyone that he had taken a while to get used to it. He had thought that it was him at first. Then she had come in, and Aaron had known that she was the person to finally replace Morgan. She was coming off of a year at teaching at the Academy while she gave her new baby, a daughter named Grace as much time as she could. The teaching was only to keep herself from going crazy, and her husband, Chris, has fully supported that.

"So how did you figure out that Cormac wasn't a dog?"

"A feeling. There is a lot of information in the world, and it takes me a while to compile it all together into something that I know. So I just waited until I couldn't deny it any longer. The UnSub was not the first that we had sought out on the Appalachian Trail. Given the breadth of the distance of the trails in the country and how many go missing never to be found, we cannot accurately figure out how many serial killers are along it. We can only react when we find them or evidence. It's not like we can just hunt them when we can't figure out where they are."

"That's kind of creepy, given how many families hike those trails, even just individuals," Callahan said.

"Yes, well that's true in the case of killers of any kind. We don't know how many of them are around. We could eat beside them every single day and not know. That's just the world that we live in." Spencer turned around to look at the SUV behind them. Prentiss was driving it. Aaron could see him frowning in the rearview mirror. He didn't know what was wrong, but he would make sure to ask Spencer when they stopped to get lunch.

"How close are you to done with the file?" Aaron asked, trying to draw the conversation from that part of the case.

"Oh, I'm done. I was working on it while we worked the case. It was what allowed me to figure out
a few things. Why?"

"Well, I was hoping that I could talk you into driving so that I could work on mine as well as a few
other things that I brought with me. I didn't get to work on them at night like I usually do." Aaron
also hoped that he could talk Callahan into sitting in the back with him and they could talk a little
easier about her first case on the team.

"Sure. When we stop for lunch. The place is about three miles up on the right."

Aaron laughed and looked around, realizing that they had come to a small city and they weren't on
back road highways anymore. Aaron saw the buffet place nearly exactly three miles up, and it was
on the right. The crowd looked small at it, but then the lunch hour was just starting. Prentiss pulled
into the spot beside where Aaron parked. JJ and Rossi were the first out with Prentiss sitting in the
front seat and frowning at her phone. She looked up and sought out Aaron's eyes.

"You all go ahead, I want coffee," Aaron said to Spencer. Spencer gave him a strange look, but he
allowed JJ and Callahan to usher him into the restaurant. Callahan was fascinated by his eating
habits. Her working with Gods of any kind was very limited.

"What's wrong?"

"Jessica wants to talk."

"Like in-person talk or over the phone? It's a buffet, it's not like you need or order."

"In person when we get back. She dropped me off at your place for the case, so she wants me to go
home with you two, and she'll leave with me."

Aaron knew that Jessica had been very weird lately, but Spencer had stopped him from pushing it,
but right now Aaron wondered if he should have pushed it. He tried to settle himself down because
he knew that Jessica was happy. That was all that Aaron wanted.

"She's happy if that helps. She's been working a little more than normal, and her time with Jack is
even limited. We've had to fall on Jin and Petal watching him a little after school until one of us can
pick him up. I don't think that it's anything bad. You guys have been serious for a while and are still
living apart. Maybe she wants to move in, and no, I don't know what she wants. She's not talked to
me about that. She usually doesn't. She usually talks to Spencer about things like that. Maybe see if
you can pump him for information. He's sometimes very loose with his lips while eating." Aaron
walked over to Prentiss and wrapped an arm around her shoulder to lead her inside of the restaurant.

The smells that assaulted Aaron were wonderful and made his mouth water. He hadn't been hungry
because of the case before now, but this was just wonderful. Aaron stopped because the actual
seating area was huge, but so wasn't the buffet. He frowned and looked around and then stepped
back outside. Prentiss did as well. Aaron looked at the building.

"It's bigger on the inside," Prentiss said.

"Yes," Aaron agreed. He opened the door again and allowed Prentiss to go inside first. The team
was seated at a table that was close to the dessert bar. Aaron looked as there were at least thirteen
various bars with food in them from all around the world. There was a salad bar on the side and
beside it was a fruit and dessert bar and then a huge dessert bar. There was even a man making sushi.
Spencer was already filling up a plate with food while the rest of the team was wandering the aisles
looking at the available food. Aaron walked toward the table meeting Spencer there as he set down a
plate before turning to head back up to the bar. Aaron caught his arm.
"This is like the TARDIS," Aaron said.

"Yes, very much so. It's the love child of a group of Old Gods. They had spent a long time making this place what it is."

"Yet, it's in rural Virginia."

"Is it?" Spencer asked. Spencer pointed at the windows and Aaron saw that each window, and there were a lot of them, showed a very different landscape. "This place is full of fun, and it's in thirty-two different cities that all connect back here to this nexus. It's like that bar we were at. God magic helps make it what it is. Gods visit and eat, and it helps keep the place running. We feed it our magic, even your magic goes into this place while you are here. It's not leaching but just taking what you give off."

"Keep the sushi bar full! A voice called out over the air. It seemed to come from everywhere and nowhere at the same time.

"So, Spencer, you said that you were wanting to talk to us," JJ said as she settled her plate on the table. The rest of the team followed, even Prentiss had a plate full of food.

"Yes, yes. Halloween is coming up. It's a Monday, but I want to have a party if we are not working a case. Starts at five, I'm sure that our Section Chief won't mind us taking off a few hours early given how much we are working lately with a man down. Kids, loved ones, everyone. Including Michael and Grace," Spencer said.

"Oh, that will be fun," Callahan said.

"Costumes?" JJ asked.

"Of course, always with the costumes, it's not good to waste a chance to dress up and have fun." Spencer grinned and kissed Aaron's cheek before slipping away to get more food. Aaron followed behind, taking the time to look at all of the food that was on offer before he picked what he wanted.

Over the near two hours that they were there, a few other people wandered in and out, eating their fill and leaving. Aaron never saw anyone taking care of the food, but unlike a lot of buffets, the food never went bad, never seemed overcooked or dried out, or even just too mushy.

On Aaron's last dessert plate, he watched as a new piece of cake appeared on the tray where he had just taken his slice from. He saw a little shimmer that said that it was a creature of some kind. Aaron wondered if this was one of the places that Pixies, and the like that didn't disappear when kids were done with them went to work and live. Drinks were refilled when one was not looking at their glass which was freaky, but the team seemed to handle it well given they were used to weird shit with Spencer. Even Callahan seemed to be taking it all rather well. Aaron hoped that she did when she met all of the Pixies that were living with Aaron and Spencer and Stormy.

Aaron opened the door and smiled at Callahan. He assumed the man with her was her husband, Chris. Meg, the niece, had baby Grace in her arms. They looked like a happy family.

"Welcome," Aaron said as he stepped back to allow them in, only as he did, he stepped on something, and the roar that was let out told him that it was Stormy. The Dragon took off in the air and landed on the chandelier that hung in the middle of the room. She growled at Aaron. "Well if you wouldn't get on the floor behind me when I answer the door I wouldn't step on you."

Stormy growled back, indignant was the tone.
"Quit picking a fight with Stormy, Aaron," Spencer called from the kitchen where he was putting the
dinal touches on whatever he was getting ready to put into the oven. The meal was simple and would
be ready after Jack, Henry, Michael, Meg, Grace, and Hank got back from trick or treating, led by
Spencer. Peaches was going to make sure to keep the meal on track while they were all out. Aaron
was kind of looking forward to heading out. Jack was already dressed and ready to go, though
Aaron had not seen his actual costume as it was draped down his body and only really recognizable
when his arms were spread out.

"You have a dragon?" Meg asked as she stepped over to look at Stormy.

"Yes. Jack's very adept at making his imaginary friends very real it seems."

"My teacher has been teaching us about this. There have been a few studies on it that have come out
recently. None of the kids in my class have one that's still around. There is a boy in another class
though that has a purple hedgehog that he keeps in a special pocket in his backpack during school
because it helps keep him calm. How many are there here?"

"Well, we have Ri who was like a nanny Pixie for Jack when he was young. Then there is Peaches
who I rescued on a case, and he became attached to Aaron. Then we have Hubert who is actually
Jack's Aunt's, but he likes my food better. He eats rose petals, and he appeared here this morning
because he was hungry and knew that Jessica would be around. Then there is Stormy. I have a lot of
other creatures up in the garden I have on the roof." Spencer looked at Callahan and then Chris
before he looked back at Meg. "Jack, do you want to take Meg up and introduce her to everyone?"

"Sure." Jack got up from where he was in his chair in the corner of the living room that was walled
off by a set of bookshelves that had decorations on them and not books. It kind of blocked off a
corner to give a little bit of privacy in the otherwise very open floor plan of the room.

"Stormy is really cool," Meg said as she tore her eyes away from Stormy and followed Jack out the
door and up to the roof.

"SO that was a very not subtle we want to have a grown-up talk," Chris said.

"At my age, I don't care for subtly most of the time, I'd rather be blunt."

"Your age?" Callahan asked. She looked at Aaron and then back at Spencer. "You are younger than
me."

"No, I'm not. So getting you here early had two reasons. One to get you introduced to everyone who
lives here. Peaches don't do well with strangers, and he's up on the roof. Jack will bring him back
down. Stormy loves everyone but meeting a Dragon, even a conjured one that can't really do a lot to
affect the room around her is still a shock. The other was to get rid of an elephant that's in the room
that you might not know a single thing about." Spencer waved for them to follow him into the
kitchen again.

Aaron followed behind and smiled as Spencer opened up the oven and the smell of a casserole he
liked hit him. It was a stupidly plain meal, but Aaron really enjoyed it. Tater Tot casserole was a big
hit with all of them. Spencer spread some cheese on top of the casseroles, two huge pans of it before
shoving them back into the oven.

"What do you know of the Gods?" Spencer asked.

"There is a lot that can be covered by that so why don't you assume that I know nothing," Callahan
said.
"Oh, I know what you on the FBI front, and that was mainly what I wanted to know. Of course, you are also aware that Gods don't have to register what they are when they join the FBI. New God, Old God, God of Knowing What Old Shit Is."

Chris laughed, and Callahan smiled.

"So, I know that you are the God Psychology and Hotch is the God of the FBI. You are both New Gods. So which of that is wrong?" Callahan asked.

"See Aaron, I told you that she was a good choice for the team. Two of those four things are wrong." Spencer walked over to the counter and sat down on the stool he usually sat on. He laid his chin on the palm of his hand and stared at Kate.

"Well, I'm pretty damned sure that it's impossible to fake a New God becoming what he was so that means that Hotch's two things are right, so it has to be your two things. You are not a New God. You then have to be an Old God. So also not the God of Psychology. Yet, you've been able to hide as that for a long time. So a very interesting Old God."

"She's very smart," Spencer said. He glanced at Aaron with a grin on his lips. "So what do you think I am the God of?"

"Are there more than one God of Knowledge?"

"No."

"You are Mimir."

"It's easy to see that when you are on the outside," Morgan said.

Aaron looked to see that Peaches was on Morgan's shoulder. Jack wasn't in the room, though.

"Peaches met me in the hall. He was hungry and didn't want flowers and leaves. So he told me to bring him inside."

"Well, there is meat and cheese over there." Spencer waved his hand where the platter was.

Aaron looked at Morgan. He was already dressed as someone, but Aaron couldn't really place it. Aaron knew that his outfit was up in the bedroom, laid out for him. Spencer was mostly in his as the 11th Doctor, he really just needed to put on a Fez. Aaron wondered who he had been made to dress up as for their Trick or Treat outing.

"You are Mickey," Aaron said.

"Yes and Savannah is going as Martha." Morgan turned an there was Savannah entering with Hank in her arms. Hank was in a costume that Aaron recognized as Adipose. JJ and Will followed next, and Henry was carrying in a box. He was going to K-9 it seemed. Michael was there with another Adipose costume on. JJ was dressed as Rose while Will was the 9th Doctor.

"If you don't have a costume for Grace, I have a third Adipose one that will fit her," Spencer said.

Aaron laughed as Prentiss came in dressed as the 10th Doctor with Jessica right behind her as Donna Noble. Aaron knew that Garcia was going as Astrid Perth, and Dave was not dressing up at all. Just going out with the team for this was enough for him. Aaron looked at Kate and Chris and saw that they were dressed as well. He knew the outfits had been a little different for Callahan, but he hadn't placed it until just then.
"The Ponds," Aaron said.

"Yes," Callahan said. She also held up the baby sling, and Aaron saw that it was made to look like wood and had Gallifreyan on it.

"And Grace is Baby River while Meg is Mels?" Aaron asked.

"Yes. We figured that we might as well look like everyone else. Not much for the 11th Doctor was taken, so we figured it was a good one. Garcia knew what everyone else was going as, so I made sure." Callahan was smiling.

"It's a party," Spencer said. He looked at Aaron and quickly nodded his head toward the stairs. "Go get dressed. I'm sure once you see what you are, you'll figure out Jack."

Aaron walked past Spencer and kissed his cheek before chuckling as he walked up the stairs. Aaron saw the coat first, and he knew exactly who he was, and then Jack's costume fit. Aaron was Jack Harkness, and Jack was playing the Face of Boe. Aaron didn't even want to guess how Garcia had got a hold of a costume like that for Jack. It could have been Spencer as well, but it was still confusing on who the hell had that on hand. Though given cos-players he wasn't really that shocked. Aaron dressed quickly in the standard costume for Captain Jack Harkness and even styled his hair as close as he could get without a picture.

"Do you guys mind if a friend goes with us?" Spencer was asking as Aaron got to the bottom of the stairs. The door was knocked on seconds later. "He's having a little bit of a rough patch and wants to have some fun that's not drinking and...well adult things." Spencer looked at the door, and it opened. Jack was walking in with Meg behind him, and then there was Jackson. Jackson was dressed Ianto.

"Oh my," Garcia said. Everyone was staring at Jackson, and Aaron could see in his eyes that he was worn out. Aaron looked at Spencer and nodded his head before he walked over to Jackson and pulled him into a hug before he kissed his forehead. The team had been made aware of Jackson's somewhat inclusion into the relationship when Jackson had dropped Aaron and Spencer off at the base when a case came up while they were all out a month before. Jackson hadn't let them leave without kissed.

"No Naked Hide & Seek," Spencer, Will, and Prentiss said at the same time, all three adopting their respective Doctor's accents. Everyone started to laugh.

"You are familiar," Callahan said as she stepped up to Aaron and Jackson.

"Ianto," Jackson reached out to shake her hand, and when Callahan put it into his hand with an of shock, he raised up and kissed the back of her hand. "So are we ready to get the kids all candied up?"

"Yes," Jack and Henry yelled. Meg was laughing a little, but she nodded her head. The three younger ones were wigging and just acting like happy little babies like they were.

Aaron was looking forward to seeing the reaction of the neighborhood to then. While Aaron was pretty sure they were used to Spencer and Aaron being their weird selves on Halloween, seeing the whole group like they were was going to garner a lot of eyes. He was glad that his family was willing to indulge Spencer and his madness.
From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Revenge is a dish best served cold.

It's a saying that Humans have long held and long said. Gods fall to either side of it. They either follow it, or they get revenge fairly quickly. I've had my revenge, and it was served frozen. I made sure that the God that killed my Ar would never come back again. He will never breathe the same air as us, and that's perfectly fine with me.

Still, revenge against me has never gone well for those who try it. The only time I have killed out of a want to take revenge is still fairly new. Yet revenge is never taken as something that makes sense. I've seen humans kill other humans just because they cut them off while talking.

I never see revenge coming, which is strange given everything that I had done in my life.

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Aaron was laughing as Jack chased Ri around the room. It was interesting to see him playing like a slightly younger child, but given that his best friend Henry was younger than him, Aaron wasn't that shocked. He looked at Henry, who was on the couch and laughing his ass off at the antics of Jack. JJ and Will were gone for a long weekend for the upcoming Valentine's Day holiday. Aaron had offered to watch Henry for them as well as Michael. The nineteen-month-old was sitting on the chair that was Spencer's and watching as Jack played with Ri. Stormy was on Michael's lap, which Aaron found adorable. Aaron took pictures of them to send to JJ when she got back. JJ and Will checked in each night, but they didn't stay on the phone that long. Aaron was happy about that. They need the weekend to reconnect.

"Where's Uncle Spencer?" Henry asked as he slipped off the couch.

"He went out for a little time to himself before we head out to the soccer fields for you all the burn off more energy. He's going to be on Michael duty all day long while I run the soccer games for all of you kids so I told him he could do breakfast on his own. He will meet us at the soccer fields later this morning." Aaron checked his phone. Spencer had been texting him as he left each place. He had hit a bookstore, ate breakfast, and was currently heading toward where he loved to read in the city. He hadn't shared that spot with Aaron, but he was okay with that. They needed a few things that were not shared between them.

Spencer was devoted to Aaron. Aaron had realized a few weeks ago that Spencer didn't look at anyone else. His eyes didn't move to the swell of a woman's breast, even if it was on display. His eyes didn't wander up a male form, even if his hard cock was evident in his pants. It had been a little sobering to Aaron. Aaron didn't look just to look, but he noticed forms and the beauty in them. Aaron had not asked Spencer about it yet. He had been giving a lecture series at the Academy on Gods, the Old and the New, when they were not on cases. He still finished the case files that he needed to work on, usually at night. If Aaron hadn't promised to watch Henry and Michael this weekend, he would have taken Spencer away somewhere, but tonight Aaron hoped to have some fun with him once the three kids were down for the night.

Aaron frowned as the door lock sounded. He readied himself to step between Jack and the door when it opened to reveal Hubert coming in. Jessica followed after. She looked a little harried.
Prentiss was just behind him.

"Hotch," Prentiss said.

Aaron knew that something was wrong.

"We have a case. Anderson is going to fill in for JJ as media liaison."

"What's going on?" Aaron picked up his phone, and he had no missed messages.

"There's been a murder in Fort DuPont Park. A human attacked a New God, and we are unsure of why, and the God himself has clamped up and refuses to talk to anyone but the BAU."

"That's not exactly a case we should take on." Aaron stood up though and looked at Jack and Henry, who were standing in the middle of the living room.

"Well, there are two things that kind of make it our case. First I want to say that the God is okay. Second, the man who is dead has an accomplice. While her real name is still unknown, we know her as Lindsey Vaughn. The second thing is that the Director was woken up from a late morning sleeping in by Reid calling him to demand that only the BAU work the case."

Aaron knew then why the BAU was working the case. He had no understanding of why Lindsey Vaughn would go after Spencer though.

"And why was I not called?"

"Reid didn't want you freaking out. Rossi was called, and since I was at home, Jessica and I decided to carpool. We can take my car, or we can take yours."

"We will take yours. Jessica knows where the keys are for my car and if she needs to go anywhere, she can." Aaron turned to look at Jack and Henry. Jack understood what was going on, given the look on his face. Aaron walked over and knelt in front of him.

"Is Papa going to be fine?" Jack asked.

"I'm going to make sure of it. If he was attacked, he is allowed to defend himself."

"Will you bring him home? What about soccer?"

Aaron looked at Jessica, and she gave him a smile.

"I think that Aunt Jessica is going to take you to soccer."

"Actually, Aunt Jessica and Uncle Derek." The look on Prentiss's face told Aaron everything that he needed to know. Morgan was coming as protection for Jack. This was an attack on Spencer, so it was best to make sure that no one else got attacked.

Prentiss's phone chimed, and she looked at it. "And Aunt Savannah and Hank. I'll make sure that your Dad texts Uncle Derek when we know anything."

Jack threw his arms around Aaron's shoulders and hugged him. It was a tight hug. "Give that to Papa, please."

"I will. I need to go get ready. Prentiss, I want the files that we have so far on my tablet. It's in my office. You know the code for it."
"You got it. I'll make sure Garcia gets it's updated." Prentiss turned and walked to the office door and slipped inside.

Aaron was numb as he got dressed. He couldn't connect why Lindsey Vaughn of all people would go after Spencer. Spencer had stopped her father from killing the boys who had taken her, but those boys would be in prison for the rest of their lives. Spencer had kept track of them. One of them had been nearly killed after he had been attacked and castrated. He had become a prison bitch as the term was for men like that in prison. The other was killed in a riot. The death that the second boy had got was less clean than if Lindsey's father had been able to kill them in that school bathroom. The first boy would suffer until he was finally killed, probably as he fought over by men in prison. It was not a clean life at all and Aaron kind of figured it was Spencer's form of justice. Lindsey could be attacking Spencer though because he had stopped her from getting what she wanted.

Saying goodbye to Jack was hard because Aaron wanted to stay with him to protect him, but he trusted that Morgan would allow nothing to happen to the boy, any of the boys. Aaron would not contact JJ about this. She didn't need to cut her vacation short just to take care of this.

"I love you," Jack said as he wrapped his arms around Aaron for a hug as Aaron picked him up. Jack still allowed hugs even though he was getting to the size that Aaron had trouble picking him up and carrying him around. He was more affectionate than other kids his age, but Aaron loved that. He pressed a kiss to Jack's forehead and only then did he make a noise of discontent. Aaron laughed a little as he set Jack down. Henry came over for a hug as well, and Aaron picked him up and gave him a bear hug.

"Give Uncle Spencer a big hug from me too," Henry said.

"I will. I'll give him one from Michael as well." Aaron set Henry down and looked at Jessica. "Thank you for doing this. I can see about getting a hold of someone else to watch Henry and Michael."

"No, it's fine. I would adore watching them. It'll help keep Jack's mind off of what's going on. We will have fun at soccer, and I'll make sure to take them somewhere fun to eat for lunch. Maybe that place with the skeeball so that Jack can practice and surprise Spencer the next time that they get to go together."

"Thank you." Aaron pressed a kiss to her cheek and looked at Prentiss as she left the office. She had Aaron's briefcase ready to go and his tablet in her hand. "You don't have to do all of that."

"It helps us get going faster." Prentiss handed over Aaron's tablet but kept a hold of the briefcase. She didn't seem to be wanting to let it go, so Aaron let her keep it. He looked at what was started so far in the system for MPD on the case. It was not looking good.

The Drive to Fort DuPont Park took a lot longer than Aaron hoped that it would. He settled in the passenger seat and read over what was there. Vaughn was accusing Spencer of attempting to rape her, and the man with her had stepped in, and Spencer killed him in revenge for messing up what he was doing. The man was supposedly a bystander, but Aaron didn't think that it would hold water at all.

The sight of Spencer sitting in the back of a police car when they pulled up was nothing anything that Aaron ever thought that he would see. He was sitting with his legs outside the car, and there was a man that Aaron had seen a few times before at Will and JJ's place when they were picking up Jack or dropping him off. Aaron was pretty sure that his name was Detective Williams.

"Agent Hotchner. We have a lot of problems with this," Detective Williams said.
"I would like to talk to my agent."

"Oh, I know you do, but right now I think that everything is better seen by you without the bias of talking to him. Agent Prentiss is more than welcome to go over and talk to him, but Agent Rossi just arrived, and I want to talk to the both of you before you go over there."

Aaron nodded his head even if he didn't want to actually do that. He wanted to check on Spencer. He followed Williams over to the little grove that Aaron could see Spencer loving to sit in and read. Even with the chill in the air, Spencer loved being outside.

A few officers were standing around the edges of the grove, keeping people back. There was the dead body in the middle of the grove. There were markers all around.

"Aaron," Dave said from where he was standing at the edge looking at everything.

"So what's wrong?" Aaron asked.

"First thing is that the young lady gave us a false name."

"Well, that's because her real name was wiped by WitSec. My team worked a case where it came out that she and her father were hiding it Witness Protection. When she turned eighteen, she had the choice to stay in WitSec or leave. So I don't know which one she chose."

"What's the connection to the agent there in the car?"

"She tried to get someone, and I can't say more on that, to kill two teenager UnSubs that we were chasing. Agent Reid stopped that from happening, and so I think she has a grudge against him. I won't be able to give you more on that."

"Well, I had already decided to hand this over, but with WitSec involved, I don't want my team on it. Yours will have a better chance of getting anything out of it. So the second thing was that when my officer was putting the cuffs on Agent Reid, he jerked in pain. The officer asked him to hold out his arms and had another officer train a gun on him while he was patted down. I was afraid he had been hurt in the tussle with the dead man. Well, what the officer found wasn't an injury from a fight but a dart in Agent Reid's skin. The dart had a barbed end, and it was the officer pressing it into his skin that made him hurt. It was pulled out and put into a bag. The thing is that it let off a smell, which one of the other officers and Agent Reid recognized."

"Rotten leaves," Aaron said.

"Yes, which is a knockout serum for New Gods. We don't know know if it just went on his skin instead of under it, but Agent Reid did not lose consciousness. Now with your words that the woman knows Agent Reid and the drug that was supposed to take him down, this wasn't Agent Reid attempting to rape anybody, and the dead man is a not a bystander who happened upon this. There is also this." Williams walked over, and there was a bag. Aaron saw that there was a syringe inside of it that Williams pulled out. It was already in an evidence bag.

"What is that?"

"Techs haven't figured it out. I was hoping that maybe your agent did. He's a New God, right? So that means that he might know what it is by smell or taste or something."

"He might know just from looking."

"The woman is being taken to safe holding. Our room that is for those who we are afraid is not as
innocent as they want us to think they are. Once the door is shut, they can't get out. You and your
team can use my people as long as you take over. This is the informal invite in, and I'll get the
paperwork started after I take her to her interrogation room. I'll watch her."

"That sounds good to me. What about Reid?"

"As soon as I get Miss Vaughn away from here, you can release him as long as you promise that an
agent stays with him at all points in time."

"I promise. I'll put Agent Prentiss on him."

"And she won't allow him to do anything?"

"She can control him well. She threatens to not give him food, and he loves food. He'll do anything
to be able to get food."

Williams looked like he wanted to laugh but was kind of afraid to.

"It's okay to laugh. His love of food is legendary. We've actually worked at the same station house
many years apart for two very different cases. They remembered him and kept food on hand for him.
The things that he likes. He was well pleased."

"Well then, I'll leave you to this." Williams left with the other officers following behind as they
rounded the grove to exit by the same way that Williams had gone.

"This ain't good, Aaron," Dave said as he came back around to where Aaron was after making his
rounds. "That Vaughn woman and the man came here to take him."

"Yes, and thankfully the cops have already thought up a reason the tranq dart didn't take him down.
I'll have Doctor Sheets come and do the blood withdraw. He's now fully set up as the God Doctor
for the area and will come to do samples and stuff. He'll make sure that there is no trace or slight
enough trace that no one will question Spencer not passing out. I didn't get that good of a look at
Spencer, was he roughed up in any way?"

"No," Callahan said as she came up behind them. "The officers took pictures, and the only person
that was roughed up as it were is the dead body here. The woman is pristine."

"Reid snapped his neck," Dave said.

"Yes, he did." Aaron swallowed and shook his head before turning around to see that Anderson was
just getting there. Aaron wondered what took him so long, he was one of the closest to this park. The
bag that Anderson reached into the backseat and pulled out before he got out told Aaron that
someone had told him to get Spencer food. It was the only place in the city that Spencer deigned to
eat Chinese from that wasn't Jin and Petal's restaurant. Aaron had to move to see Spencer and
Prentiss. She was unlocking Spencer's cuffs. He stayed in the cop car though. Anderson handed over
the bag, and Spencer nodded his thanks. Aaron didn't see his lips move.

"So we have to figure out what Miss Vaughn has been up to since the last time that we saw her. We
also need to get Callahan and the other officers up to speed. Are the locals staying on evidence
collection?"

"Yes. Let's let them keep that part of everything. If this goes the way that I think it will, it won't take
long to go up to a federal case, if for no other reason than WitSec doesn't want the publicity that an
open trial will have and that will be more likely if it stays in the lower courts."
"So she's been a suspect before?"

"No, last time she was a victim, but she was showing traits of being a psychopath before, but she was s teenagers, and all of them profile on the spectrum in some way shape or form because of their changing minds. She was lost into WitSec with her father, and so we could not keep track of her, and the Marshals did not believe that they needed to keep that close of an eye on her. I wouldn't be shocked if there were a few bizarre things that happened in the areas she was. I'm going to get in contact with the Marshals, and I want you two to go and talk to Jack, or whatever name he is using at this time."

"You got it."

"So what was the father?" Callahan asked as she and Dave turned to leave the grove.

"Hitman," Dave answered.

"So that apple didn't fall far from the tree, did it?"

"No."

Aaron focused on the scene and saw the marker for Spencer's book that was on the ground, laying in a way that said that Spencer did not set it down. Pages were turned and pressed into the ground. There was still dew on the grass because the sun hadn't got high enough to shine down on the grove and it was only filtered through the small areas of breaks in the branches for the trees and needles of the pine trees that were everywhere. Aaron figured it was why Spencer liked it, it was still kind of invisible to be inside of it when it was winter. Which in this case had not helped him at all.

Two officers came into the clearing with gloves in hand and handed them to Aaron. It seemed like they were the replacements for the ones who had been in there before. Aaron opened the dead man's vest he was wearing, the buttons had been ripped, and it was flopped open.

"Do we have an ID?"

"No. We already did a sweep on his body for an ID. There was nothing. He has a few tattoos on his person. We tried to print him, but it seemed that they burnt them off recently."

"Which only delays an ID it doesn't stop it. The tattoos...

"The ME will take pictures. I only noticed them checking for ID and for an entry wound on the body. A few tattoos on the torso. If they are in the system for inmates, we will know."

"Good. So we will know if he has served time or not." Aaron looked at the man's face. The eyes were still open, which told Aaron that the officers didn't think that he was a victim. Aaron smiled as he stood up. "How long on the ME?"

"She should be here in a few minutes. You can go over and talk to your agent. He's entertaining the other officers with a show of how fast he can shove food in his mouth and not choke."

"He eats a lot. His God powers are better fueled by food instead of worship."

"That's interesting. I've been taking classes at the Academy by him. The FBI has been opening them up to those who are local and work in law enforcement who deal with Gods. It's been really educational."

"You were the first on the scene, weren't you?"
"Yes. I was also the one that did the weapon check on him. When I found no weapon him and then hurt him, I knew that something was up. Well, I knew that something was not right as soon as I got here. I've dealt with attempted rape victims a lot. I've been on duty in the area around this park for a long time. Parks are still big points for rape for the men and women who don't care who they get. I've seen a huge range of emotions afterward. The lady, even before I ran her name, she just seemed to radiate smug. That's not exactly an emotion for just after it happened. The trial and when it's over, yes. To feel that they helped put up a monster. This was just...not normal or right at all."

"Your instincts are good. If you ever get tired of this, apply at the FBI. Use my name." Aaron handed over a card before he stood up to take in the whole scene again. The officers stayed back to let Aaron see all that he could. "Have the bushes been gone through?"

"Detective Williams wanted us to wait for CSU to get here before we started to trample the area and he wanted the body gone just to be safe."

"Yeah, debris from the trees falling on it and such from disturbing the area. If you don't mind, I might help CSU with that."

"They won't mind at all, Sir."

"You can just call me Hotch." Aaron wasn't going to leave until he had everything that he needed to sink the rape declaration that Vaughn was giving.

Detective Williams settled in at the table across from Lindsey. She wasn't chained up at all and had been given food and pop. Thankfully to make sure that everything was good, her DNA had been taken to match against samples on Spencer's body.

"Isn't there usually two people in an interview with rape victims?" Vaughn asked.

"I have two agents joining me in a few seconds. They were getting a drink before coming in. I have a video recording all of this though." Williams didn't look up at her as he shuffled the papers around in the file. Aaron knew exactly what was in that file because he had put it all together. Most of it was images of Taylor Coleman and Ryan Phillips, Coleman as he had been the last photographed, dead on a slab in the prison morgue and Phillips images after being castrated. It was horrific, and Aaron didn't like looking at them, but he was used to images like that from victims over the years.

Prentiss laid her hand on Aaron's shoulder as she walked around and entered the room. Aaron felt Spencer settle in at his side and wondered what Williams thought he was going to get from Lindsey, but he knew that Williams had his way of doing things and Aaron was more than happy to let him take the lead as he didn't think anyone on the team could be that impartial for this part.

"So, Miss Vaughn," Williams started. he pulled the sheet out of the folder that had the rushed results form the tox screen done on Spencer as well as on the dart and the syringe that had been found. "Why were you there in that area with two different drugs for subduing a New God?"

"I wasn't. That was the man I think. The man who died protecting me." Vaughn started to cry a little like she was remembering the tragedy she had been through just eight hours before.

"Then why were your prints the only ones on the bag?" Williams asked.

"I don't know. Maybe that man didn't want his prints on it."

"Well, Miss Vaughn that doesn't explain why your prints are on it."
"After that, Agent killed the man I got into it to find something to protect myself."

"Well, the man who was killed was found with this in his pocket." Williams set down the evidence bag with the crude dart launcher in it. "So that means he went there to catch that man. So why would that man go there to catch a New God FBI Agent?"

"I don't know. I don't know why that man would do anything."

"See, this is where we have a problem, Miss Vaughn. Your prints were found on the wad of cash that was in the man's back pocket. Not just on the outside bill but on every single bill, mostly in the places where prints would go if one were counting it out. One thousand dollars in twenties. That's a lot of prints, and those can't be called coincidental." Prentiss set down the bag with that money in it down in front of Lindsey. "There is also the fact that this is not the first case we have worked with you. You tried to incite your father to kill those boys who had kidnapped you. They raped and killed Katie but hadn't got that far. Ryan Phillips killed Douglas Silverman but then you tried to incite your father to kill Ryan and Taylor in the bathroom of Mayford High."

"that's just what that agent said about me. There was no proof, and it was his word against mine and my father's."

Prentiss pulled out a tape recorder and hit play. There was Jack Vaughn, or whatever name he was going by, telling everything that had happened in that bathroom right up until Agent Reid stopped him by grabbing the gun and turning it on him. Lindsey looked very shocked at that.

"So do you want to revise your statement of what happened."

"Agent Reid saw me and was overcome by his anger at what I tried to get my father to do, to avenge me that he started to rape me." Lindsey looked like she was smug.

"Ready?" Spencer asked.

Aaron jumped a little as he had forgotten that Spencer had entered the room. Prentiss and Williams gave subtle nods of their heads. Spencer walked into the room, holding the bag with the syringe in it.

"There is also the fact that your fingerprint is on the end of this plunger, Maisie."

"That's not my name," Vaughn said.

"No, it's not been your name for a long time, but according to your DNA and what WitSec has finally given to us, it was the name that you were born with. Your father is still in hiding, and we aren't going to let this get back to the papers so as of ten minutes ago, your DNA is no longer connected with Maisie. It's stuck with the name of Lindsey Vaughn. You'll be tried under that name so that we can connect this case and the one that my team worked before. The DNA also came back on your friend, Jonathan Walker. Called Johnny Walker in the prison where he works. He hates New Gods, but he was a smart man. He had a letter sent to the FBI just in case he was killed in his attack on me. It laid out everything. You wanted to kidnap me, and you never told him what you wanted to do with me. So you changed your plans when I didn't go down."

"How did you not go down?"

"Mouth blown darts are not the most effective. It discharged most of the fluid onto my shirt. I got enough to make me a little weak, but that was it. It's why it took me so long to kill him when he attacked me to subdue me on your commands. The syringe was your backup plan as it had a more concentrated dose of the drug to knock out New Gods. So you were left with little to do but try and get a rape charge brought up on me. That would have ruined my working for the FBI in the BAU
again."

Lindsey clammed up and said nothing else. Spencer just smirked at her, Aaron could see the upturn of his lips.

"By the way, there was a camera in the grove. There were issues with vandalism, and our tech has the video now. Would you like to see it?" Spencer asked as he turned to the door again and opened it.

"Why couldn't you just let my father kill them? He should have been able to avenge Katie and me."

"Because then that would make him no better than the boys he killed," Spencer said as he turned back to Lindsey. "We are supposed to stop death that's my job, and I'll never allow anything to stop me from doing it." Spencer walked up behind Williams and pulled out the image of Coleman's body and tossed it down on the table then the image of Phillips's crotch after his balls had been removed.

"What is this?" Lindsey demanded before she shoved the photos away.

"That's Coleman after he was killed in a prison riot three years after going in. He died slowly after being shivved for not moving quick enough and stopping the rioters from getting where they wanted to be. He died in pain and gasping. There was footage of it. The other is Phillips after he was castrated and made the prison bitch for a group of men. He's still being passed around between them by the way. He can't even get hard anymore. He's a hole for them to fuck. So which is better? What you wanted your father to do or what they had to live with, or will have to live with until the end of their lives?"

Lindsey looked at the pictures again.

"Karma comes around. I've learned that as a God. You tried to take what destiny had in store, and now you are going to be subject to the same karma." Spencer walked over to the table Lindsey was sitting at. "I look forward to seeing what happens to you in prison. Women can be just as vicious."

Spencer left the room that time, leaving Williams and Prentiss to sit there in silence as Lindsey took in it all. Spencer looked at Aaron. "Someone else was pulling her strings."

"What?" Aaron asked.

"I don't know who but there is someone else moving around in the shadows who set her on this course to try and take me out. I would like Garcia to track Vaughn's movements from when she left WitSec if she can. I'm going to contact a few other people as well. There is more anger there right now than just Vaughn's. The letter that the MPD got said that the guard was pretty sure that something big was going to happen. That I didn't go down with the drug meant that plans were changed."

"How much was in your body?" Aaron asked.

"Trace amount, enough to actually do what I said it would. The rest was on my clothes. They used something that wouldn't make noise, and it was their downfall. Now I think that we have dinner plans with Jack, Henry, and Michael. The police captain of this station house set me free by the way as soon as the tox screens came back."

"How did you get the DNA rushed so quickly?"

"Jackson has a deal with the MPD to use their lab for DNA comparisons as needed, and Jackson is also going through the entire backlog of rape kits. It's starting in New York City and other big cities
and will spiral out from there. No charge. That opens up the actual labs for LEOs to focus on current cases. It's helped the flow of cases locally and get justice for seventeen women so far by testing old DNA in places where they can still be held accountable. However, the cases that have lapsed out of the ability to prosecute are still being tested because while those women won't see justice, there could be other cases. The federal courts have ruled that past DNA from past rapes that can't be prosecuted because of time can be used to show a method of attack when a newer crime is found."

"I've read a little bit about that. Jackson was the one who pushed a lot of that. I didn't know about running the DNA."

"Yes, there is a lab here that Jackson built. It's run by two former FBI agents who were retired due to injury. He put them through all of the schooling needed to run the lab. He'll build something like that in a few points in states when he gets them all up and running if the state has that many kits."

"Who do you have as the person who is pulling Vaughn's strings?" Aaron asked. He was trying to process what Jackson was doing. Aaron knew that the man hated that so much got passed going through actual courts because of technology and such, but he didn't realize that Jackson had started to be that proactive about it.

"I don't know yet. It could be someone from the cases, or it could be someone from my past. I'll have to start to make a list. An hour and then we leave?"

"Yes. Dave and Anderson said they could close up everything here."

Aaron wondered at why Spencer thought it might be someone from the past before he was Spencer Reid. The best way to fuck him would be to reveal who he is or at least something along those lines. Aaron figured that it was someone that was wanting to get revenge for what he had done during the work of a case. There was just nearly thirteen years of cases to go over to figure it out. That was going to take time. Thankfully, neither of them slept.
Humans leave more than just fingerprints over their machinations. They leave so much more and never notice it. Gods are good at putting things together. They are good at following little tendrils. Like the buying of a drug or the paying off of a prison guard. Regular Humans think they are smart, but they are stupid when they believe that they can take on the God of Knowledge in anything and think they are going to win. Or really the God of Anything and win.

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"Miss Adams," Aaron said as he sat down in front of her at the table, she was chained to. Cat Adams was acting smug, and Aaron was glad. He loved taking down the smug UnSubs. He enjoyed killing their hopes that they ever thought they could win. Aaron agreed that Cat wanted Spencer, so they weren't going to give him to her. Spencer was actually not even in the building at all. He was with Garcia in a mobile unit just outside of the prison. They were connected through a comms unit and a camera in Aaron's tie pin. The Director of the FBI had been the one with the backing of Richmond to bar Spencer from going into the prison. Richmond was afraid that Spencer would kill her. Aaron wasn't sure that he wouldn't either.

"Where is Spencer? I thought that he would be the one to come in here."

"He's working a different case at the moment."

"Did you lose someone?" Cat asked, and Aaron really wanted to reach out and smack her. He had never really had the urge to hit a woman before, but she did it to him.

"Not really. Someone was almost kidnapped from across town. But don't worry, we got the man who tried to take the person."

Aaron could see her cogs turning trying to figure out if Aaron was talking about Jack and Henry's attempted kidnapping or something else. The door opened, and Lionel Wilkins stepped into the room and nodded his head before he stepped out again. It was for Aaron as much as it was for Cat.

"Well, Agent Hotchner, have you heard from your son in a while?"

Aaron stared at her and frowned before he picked up his phone and texted to Spencer. He typed out asking Spencer to call Jessica to check on Jack because Aaron wasn't sure how well she was at figuring out typing on onscreen keyboards. Aaron knew several people who could figure out what one was typing by seeing where the fingers went even from the other side of a table. Spencer was one, but he knew Garcia was pretty damned good at it as well as a few other techie people that Aaron knew.

Aaron's phone chimed, and he frowned at the screen.

"Where is my son?"

"You aren't going to get him back or his little friend until I have Spencer here in front of me. Then you get to pick who gets released. The second won't be released until I say so and it's when I get what I want which is Spencer to go to prison so he can see what it's like to do what you have to do to
"So you admit that you were behind the thing with Lindsey Vaughn?" Aaron asked.

"You are not Spencer."

"Well, Cat, Spencer isn't coming in here no matter what. Thank you though for admitting that you were behind the attempted kidnapping of two children of Federal agents."

"What?" Cat looked at the door, and it was opened again, and there was Lionel in cuffs. She got a quick look at him before the door was shut and he was taken off to be thrown in a cell to wait his bailing hearing, which Aaron was going to make sure he did not get.

"It was easy to get Lindsey to turn on you, Cat. When she found out that you were in a relationship with Wilkins here and are carrying his baby. She thought that you were her lover alone. Even though she's never actually been around you like that in a while. She's loyal to you. Were you training her to join your group? Be an apprentice? She's going to spill it all in time. Which is where Spencer is, by the way, Cat. He's decided that he wants to talk to her and get information from her instead of you. You are barely a blip on his radar."

"I demand he come here right now!" Cat slammed her hands down on the table, the chains keeping her there rattled.

"Vaughn is spilling everything in exchange for a reduction on where she is being held, and you are going to go on trial again. You are going to be in prison until you die with no chance of being released. What do you think about that? You are only going to see Spencer when he's at your trial explaining everything that has happened to him. How your plot almost destroyed the career of an exemplary New God who has worked for the FBI for over a decade."

"He's never even going to show his face here?" Cat asked.

"No. He's uncaring on what happens to you." Aaron was just glad that he could lie well enough to make sure that Cat never noticed the falsehood. Spencer wanted to be in there, but Aaron was very confident that he would kill her. No one needed that headache. There was enough of one brewing with the whole Direwolves thing that was going on.

"How did you protect them?"

"I didn't. No Human stepped in and saved them. The young man that you and Lionel convinced to kidnap Spencer and I's son, as well as Spencer's Godson, was killed by the way."

"How?"

"See our son has a really, really good knack for what normal Humans call imaginary friends. He has created a few over the years. Stormy is his favorite, but she's moved on to a new person as Jack no longer has an interest in having a Dragon as a pet. Stormy loves little Michael a lot and she happy in her new place, even if two Humans are still a little shaky on having a pet dragon in their house. Lately, Spencer's been telling Jack nighttime stories about Direwolves named Nymeria and Ghost. So now I have gone from having a Dragon named Stormy to a Direwolf that Jack's calling Nymeria as it's a female in my house. She's very pretty and huge. I have no clue how in the hell I'm going to not have my house destroyed by her, but she's very protective of Jack at the moment and hadn't allowed anyone, but Spencer and I close to him. Though I at least have a huge place. My co-worker JJ is going to have to move because Henry has Ghost. Have you seen pictures of Direwolves from the Games of Thrones? The shows or even the book renderings? Yeah, those things are huge, and
right now there are two of them protecting two little boys who are scared that someone is going to attempt to take them again."

"That's real?" Cat asked.

Aaron picked up his tablet and brought up the footage that had been caught on tape of the near abduction. He pressed play as he had the video already queued up. There was the scream that would haunt Aaron's nightmares for a while if he even slept for months that was. Then the twin snarls from Ghost and Nymeria. Aaron had already set up the registration for them that had come up as more and more friends were appearing to kids around the country. There was no way to kill them or make the kids get rid of them, so there was a registry to keep track, just in case one moved on. At the moment, there wasn't an officer that had got close enough to Jack or Henry to talk to them without a Direwolf between them. Aaron had still not given Spencer a piece of his mind about the nighttime stories that Spencer was telling Jack, and it seemed that Jack was telling Henry.

Cat actually looked a little sick to her stomach as the camera recorded in color, and the red blood that was everywhere around Nymeria was very evident. Ghost had stayed back and protected the boys from everyone until the threat had been contained.

"Our tech followed the man on camera from where he had let with Wilkins before he had gone to take Jack and Henry. That's how we figured the rest of this out. Did you know that when they did that test to make sure that your baby was okay they did a DNA test? You were not pregnant when you were put into the system and was tested again when you were confined to this prison. For a month we have suspected how close the two of you were and so we waited for the two of you to give us enough rope to hang you with. There are two ways that a guard gets an inmate pregnant. Rape or seduction. Spencer was the one that thought it was seduction on your end. Wilkins doesn't fit the profile of most rapists. So when it hit that it was his kid, I had already had a flag on your file about contacting the BAU before anything was done with you on anything. The Warden contacted me, and I told him what to do. Wilkins has not been alone with you since which I am sure you knew, but the new guard he was training is actually an undercover agent that's undergoing training for prison life, just in case."

"How did you beat me again?" Cat asked.

"Because UnSubs like you are never as clever as you think you are, especially when I have a God of Psychology on my side and then there is my own Godness. Have a good day, Cat Adams." Aaron stood up, picking up a few things as he got ready to leave. Cat tried to grab at him, but Aaron dodged her easily and left the room. There was still anger burning inside of Aaron as he made his way out of the prison. He was pissed that from prison, someone would try and ruin Spencer's life. He hated that someone had tried to take his kids and he was really pissed that he had just gotten rid of Stormy and now had a Direwolf.

Aaron didn't stop moving outside of waiting for gates to open until he was standing inside of the mobile command unit. Spencer was standing at the back on the phone with someone speaking a language that Aaron knew he had heard before but couldn't place. He looked at Garcia.

"You did good, Bossman. We have what we need to put her away for a long time. The Warden has already got a hold of the FBI to have a team come in and interview every single guard in the place to make sure that Cat Adams doesn't have her claws in anyone else. How is Jack?"

"Well, he and Henry gave baths to the wolves according to Jessica out in the large grass field behind the apartment building, and now they are all cuddled on the floor and watching TV."

"You know they look a lot like the Direwolves from the Game of Thrones TV show right?"
"I'm well aware of what they look like. I'm already going to talk to Spencer about what he's talking to Jack at bedtime."

"I did some research. There is a kid in Japan who had manifested all kinds of creatures based off of myths and legends of Japanese lore and had all but turned them loose in the city. There hasn't been a lot of harm, but it's interesting. What are you going to do with them?"

"Learn to live with a wolf because I am not even going to attempt to get Ghost away from Henry and I don't think that anyone wants to take Nymeria from Jack."

"Morgan also texted me. It seems that Ri has shown up at his house and has started to boss around Savannah and him on how to make a place for her to live with them until Hank is old enough that he doesn't need her anymore."

"Well, it's not like I need her anymore. Jack can take care of himself as far as food and such goes, and now he has a Direwolf as his protection. I need to get a hold of New Haven and see what they are going to do about this."

"Henry starts there this coming fall," Garcia said.

"Great, I'll talk to them about two wolves." Aaron rubbed at the bridge of his nose. he wanted to go home and get settled in with Jack, but that was hours away at this point. He looked at Spencer, who was hanging up the phone, but he dialed right away again. Aaron sighed and started to work on the file he needed to send to the Director. He had a lot to do, and he wanted it done as soon as possible.

Aaron had found the note taped to his front door. It was Spencer's handwriting; it even had that little hitch that said he wrote it fast that Aaron had learned long ago. It was directing him to the vacant lot behind the apartment building. He stopped when he saw the concrete wall that had been made around the entire area, there was a water basin that Aaron had seen on farms for horses that seemed to be hooked up to the water line for the lot. There was a vast picnic area where there was a grill, with Morgan operating that grill. There was even a tree in one corner that had not been there the day before. Aaron had chased Jack around the lot, trying to get rid of some of the boy's energy.

"So we bought this?" Aaron asked Spencer as he got closer to his lover.

"No. I've always owned this. I just made sure that a few Forest Nymphs I knew came and grew a tree for shade, and then Morgan rounded up some guys that he knew and closed in the area. They'll come back tomorrow and get a gated path made from the back door of the building so that the wolves can move as they want."

"Wolves? We are taking both?"

"No," JJ said as she stepped up to Aaron and wrapped an arm around his waist to give him a hug. "Spencer has offered us that unused small house next door. I guess he owns it as well. A gated path is going to be made there as well. It's got three bedrooms beside the master so Henry and Ghost can have their own, Michael can have a room and then we will have a guest room. It's just big enough for us, and I really like it. For now, until we get moved in, yes you'll have both places for them."

"And Stormy isn't jealous?" Aaron asked. He looked around for Michael and found him sitting in a chair with Stormy over his legs like a blanket. She looked to be asleep. It didn't seem like she was that upset at all.

"No, Henry's making sure that Michael knows that Stormy is his and Ghost is Henry's. So is Cat all taken care of?" JJ asked.
"Yes. She's not going to bother us again. She's opted to abort the child and Wilkins didn't fight her on that at all. It's not like Wilkins' wife is going to want to raise it, and Cat has no family to take it in." Aaron looked at Spencer who was by the grill with Morgan now. "How is he?"

"Freaked out but trying to make sure that Jack and Henry don't freak out."

"And the boys?" Aaron looked at Jack and Henry again to see them playing with the Direwolves that were huge compared to them. He shook his head and sighed as Jack came running to him.

"DAD!" Jack jumped in the air, and Aaron barely caught him. "Nymeria and Ghost don't eat. We've tried to feed them all day, and they don't eat. I already told Papa that the water isn't needed, but he said that the Pixies who take care of the gardens are going to make one here and they will use it. Something about flower pots that hang on the walls. So I don't have to worry about feeding them. That also means that they don't poop, so we don't have to worry about stepping in doggy poop. Papa said that it probably would have been bigger than his head which I would have loved to have seen but oh well. I'm hungry, and Papa said that we would eat when you got here. Are we going to hang out tomorrow?"

Aaron figured that Jack was still a little freaked out, and it was why he was so hyper. Aaron just hoped the boy crashed at some point during the night.

"Yes, we are going to hang out tomorrow. Why don't we go and see about dinner?" Aaron looked down to make sure that he wasn't going to step on Ghost and the white wolf was there at his side, waiting for Aaron it seemed.

"Papa likes Nymeria. Nymeria likes him too. Nymeria laid over his legs while we were talking. Papa had a very serious discussion on how it's my job to make sure that nothing happens with her. He talked to Henry too. New Haven is going to have a class that teaches us all about responsibility if our friends do things. Nymeria protected me and Henry today, so didn't Ghost but I can't just have them hurt people that I don't like unless my life is in danger."

"It's good that he talked to you about that." Aaron stopped right beside Morgan at the grill.

"Hey, Hotch. I see that Jack has found you that means I can start cooking for real."

"Yes, Garcia told me about Ri. Should I say I am sorry?"

"No, man."

Aaron felt Jack wiggling, and so he set the boy down on the ground and watched as he took off with Nymeria on his heels. Henry and Ghost were over in the corner playing.

"Are you sure?"

"Ri's a good little Pixie, and she comes highly recommended. I mean she didn't let you and Reid fuck up Jack all that much," Morgan said with a smile on his face.

"It's more like Ri and Reid didn't let me fuck up Jack all that much." Aaron looked at his lover.

"Ri's probably going to make her way around the BAU as needed. I wouldn't be shocked if more and more popped up from other kids. Garrett probably had one and doesn't know it. The BAU teams being gone for long times kind of breeds it."

"Let me know if you want to go investigate his house. I kind of want to see that," Morgan said.
"Ha, ha Morgan." Spencer walked over to pick up Michael, and it looked like he was getting ready to play with him. Hank tottered over to join them.

"I think I made out in the deal. I have a Pixie that can talk and take care of herself. Not a Dragon or a Direwolf."

"Please don't remind me. Thankfully, Nymeria won't get fleas, won't shed, and thankfully won't eat us out of house and home."

"I'm going to do the renovation on the house. Reid's already talked to me about it. I'll have it done as soon as I possibly can. I haven't started another house yet, so I can slot them in right away. I'll come over with Reid and JJ and look tomorrow. Maybe after I could do a meal with you all. Hank misses Spencer. He keeps on asking for Pen and holding that stuffed bear he got him. He carried it around for an hour yesterday, hanging behind him with just a grip on the foot, looking like a sad little boy."

"That's kind of adorable. Jack did something like that once. When Spencer was gone for a few days with a custodial with Dave. It was cute, but he was also twice Hank's age. Who would have thought though that every single kid on the team would have a favorite person and it was the same person."

"I would not have seen this," Morgan said with a laugh as the group playing with Spencer grew by two older boys and two wolves, as well as a Pixie and a Dragon. "That day that he walked into the bullpen. None of this. Not Savannah, not Hank. Nothing. My entire life had been planned out as far as what I wanted to do in the FBI. Taking your job when you were finally ready to retire. Then you became a God, and it was getting my own team."

"I didn't have any of this planned. I didn't see myself getting divorced from Haley, having Jack and raising him alone, then not alone but with Spencer."

"Yeah but you are happy. Man, you are happier than you ever were with Haley. I knew that years ago. You smiled more even before the sexual side of the relationship started. You were happier in a weird non-sexual relationship with a New God than you were with a woman who you adored. It took one time of hearing Reid talk about a weekend with you and Jack and that told me that he was just as enamored. It was kind of adorable watching you two grow closer and closer, and it seemed like you were both unaware. Then it all came out, and it was just you two fumbling to get a relationship figured out."

"Yeah, it's all pretty strange the path to where we are. Spencer is better at rolling with the punches as far as the freaky stuff goes, but I'm learning a little bit of how to not react to strange things like my son manifesting a Direwolf to kill a man who was kidnapping him."

"Makes me wonder what Hank, Michael, and Grace will do over time. So how are you taking that?" Morgan pointed with his bottle of beer over to where Prentiss and Jessica were sitting in the same chair with Jessica sitting in Prentiss's lap.

"As well as I can be. Spencer has talked to me until he's blue in the face about it. I'm happy that Prentiss is happy. I'm happy that Jessica is happy. I know that Prentiss freaked out about moving in with Jessica months ago, but Jessica waited it out. She is happy. She's never showed interest in anyone, even when we were all younger. At one point, Haley thought that she had a crush on me, but I didn't think so, even when we were in high school. After a while, I assumed she was asexual and didn't want to come out to anyone. I would read a book about it and papers on it and leave them places she would find them. She never brought it up. She did seem to grow closer to me after that. Though there was a few on all sexualities. She probably assumed I was hiding those among the asexual ones just to cover my bases."
"You used to look at her like a sibling, Hotch. That's never changed even after time apart. I remember that party that Haley put on where we all met her. It was evident."

"Still, it's nice for Jack to have a family. He loves her, and she loves him. Though I think that she's getting the little pitter patter of feet in her head." Aaron smiled as he watched Spencer direct Jack to rush to Jessica and tug her out of her seat. Jessica and Prentiss both went over to play with them.

"To family, no matter what form it takes." Morgan raised up his bottle of beer, and Aaron grabbed one and cracked it open before he toasted him with it.

"To family."
From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

History repeats itself. Humans think that if they learn from it, it won't repeat itself. Gods like me, they see the same ripples over and over again. There is no stopping it because it all starts small and builds unseen until nothing can be done about it except hope the fallout is less.

I fought in World War I and in World War II. I killed Nazis when I came across them. I killed officers, generals, I wish I would have been the one to put a bullet into the head of Hitler himself. Gods are supposed to be aloof, but after going after the Jews, after going against everyone who was different from him, he would have gone after us Gods next. My world wasn't safe, and I needed it to be safe.

There are those who seek to have Gods killed just because they think that they shouldn't exist because their One God deemed that he was the one to be worshiped. That he was better than the rest of us. We all think we are better than the rest. Killing in the name of a God though isn't exactly something we like. We would rather you just pray to us, maybe burn a loved object in sacrifice. Never anything living.

October 2017

Aaron wasn't sure what to expect when he arrived back at home. Spencer had come home hours before him, citing that he was done with his paperwork, which was shorter than it usually was but had the facts so Aaron couldn't call him on that. Jack had made plans with a kid down the street to spend the night there, so Jessica had dropped him off there after school. It was Friday night, and yet, Aaron was pretty sure that Spencer was not planning a date of some kind.

The apartment was empty though, Aaron could tell that just by entering it. He looked around for a note but found nothing in the officer, the library, the living room, and even the kitchen. Aaron grabbed a glass and filled it with juice from the fridge before he drank it. He wanted something sweet that wasn't candy, so he settled for juice.

Aaron found that Spencer had laid out club clothes for him, so Aaron was pretty sure that he knew where he was. Aaron hoped into the shower quickly before he secured the apartment again and walked to the club. Spencer had walked as well because his car was still in the spot. Aaron wondered exactly when Spencer had gone to the club.

Even though they went less than they did before, the bouncer at the door nodded at Aaron and let him inside without any issue. Aaron made his way down the hall to the door that opened for Gods. The club was dark, darker than Aaron was used to, at least around the edges. There was enough light to see bodies in seats, but that was about it. There was light coming from the bar though, and it lit up the dance floor in the middle where it seemed that there was some kind of dance going on.

Aaron stayed where he as, just moved out of the way of the door to look at the mass that was writhing on the floor. He wanted to watch from a better angle, so he walked over to the stairs that would take him up a level. He didn't have to fight past the guard who made sure that no one who wasn't allowed went up. He walked until he was standing above the bar with the best light to see who was on the floor. He found Spencer in the center of the mass of people.

"He's drunk," Aaron said. He frowned and was about to move when he felt a hand on his shoulder.
Aaron looked to his side to see that a man who was almost as beautiful as Spencer was standing there. He was dressed in a pale pink suit. One point in time a long time before he might have tempted Aaron.

"He is drunk. He's been drinking steady enough to stay drunk even as he dances, drinks water, and eats food. He'll wake up with a headache from hell in the morning, but I think it's better than remembering."

"Remembering what?"

"All of his past. I didn't ask, and he didn't tell me, but I think that he's a little lost in the past and can't escape. He didn't go as far back as your death, but he's seen all of the wars that Humans had made in the names of Gods."

"Who are you?"

"I'm no one really outside of my clubs anymore," Bacchus said as he smiled at Aaron and leaned his head close to whisper in Aaron's ear. "He needs to forget. He needs to shut down his mind."

Bacchus patted Aaron's shoulder before he walked away from Aaron, leaving Aaron to his thoughts.

Aaron nodded his head and looked down at Spencer once again. He watched as his lover danced and danced, pulling whoever was close to him in but never going past the line of just having fun dancing with them, even if a few did look like they wanted more. Spencer was looking to have a good time, and he wanted Aaron there for it.

Deciding that he wanted to watch for a few moments more, Aaron settled in to lean against the railing and watch. Spencer was drenched in sweat for dancing, his body seemingly going where it wanted on the dance floor, from male to female and back. From singles to groups. He always darted away from hands that he didn't want to touch him and allowed only glancing passes of hands on his shoulders and arms as he danced.

The song changed to something that had a kick to the drumbeat, and Aaron found that it drew him down the stairs. He stopped at the bar to get a drink that he downed quickly. It wasn't enough to get him drunk, but it would help him feel a little less out of place. He watched Spencer on the floor form the edges, seeing his hair flopping around as he danced, turning this way and that to the beat. Aaron moved through the crowd slowly and kept his focus right on Spencer.

It was another two songs before Spencer started to realize that he was being watched. His eyes darted above the heads of those who were around him, he was looking for the gaze that wasn't leaving him. Aaron would duck behind someone as Spencer's eyes got close to him. Aaron made his way around to Spencer's back and stepped close enough to touch. He slipped a hand onto Spencer's hip.

"HEY!" someone called out, and Aaron felt himself being pulled back from Spencer. Aaron turned to look at them and glared. He didn't know them at all. Then his face was being drawn back around to where he could look at Spencer. Spencer leaned in and kissed Aaron right there in the middle of the song. It was ended long before Aaron wanted it to be, but Spencer turned back around, settled down into Aaron's body. Aaron laid both hands on his hips this time, using it to keep Spencer close as they both danced. Aaron could feel the beat of the song in his entire body. It made his blood rush and made him feel like he was drunk when he knew that he wasn't.

There were no spoken words as they danced, Aaron's hands on Spencer body in one way, shape, or form. Aaron gave in to the sway of Spencer's hips and allowed himself to be lured into full-on dancing. He didn't fight it and just let the music and drink wash over him. Aaron was hard long before the second song after touching Spencer ended. His hands would fondle Spencer there on the
floor, feeling his hard cock as well.

"Room," Aaron said after he couldn't take it any longer. He had lost count of the songs they danced to, the songs that Spencer rubbed his ass on Aaron's cock or turned around in Aaron's arms and rubbed their cocks together.

"Yes," Spencer hissed as Aaron gripped his cock through his tight pants.

The crowd split like they knew exactly where Aaron and Spencer were going. Aaron forced his hand to let go of Spencer's hip to grab his hand as they exited the dance floor. Spencer didn't turn around at all and just led them down to the last door down the hall. Aaron looked at the doorway as he passed through it and decided that if anyone wanted to watch, they could.

Aaron grabbed Spencer's hair and pulled him around to kiss him. The kiss was consuming Aaron as he let go of Spencer altogether to get him naked. He didn't stop ripping clothes from Spencer's body until he felt nothing but flesh. Spencer, it seemed that got rid of his shoes and socks. Spencer focused on Aaron, opening up his shirt but not pushing it off of his body. Instead, he slowly dropped to his knees, kissing flesh as he went while his hands worked Aaron's jeans open to get his cock out.

Spencer licked at the head of his cock, so Aaron grabbed the back of his head, tangling his fingers into hair and he pulled Spencer down. Pushing Spencer's face into his flesh as he thrust forward. Aaron pulled his back, and Spencer opened up his mouth. Aaron lined up his cock with the open mouth and pushed forward with it. Spencer moaned around his cock as he bottomed out in Spencer's mouth. Aaron set up a brutal pace as he just knelt there and took it. Aaron didn't allow himself to come. He kept on going just until that point and then pulled out of Spencer's mouth.

Guiding Spencer up by his hair, Aaron started to kiss him, tasting himself in that mouth. He backed Spencer up to the bed and shoved him onto it on his back. Spencer scooted up without being told while spreading his legs at the same time. Lube and condoms were already on the nightstand, but Aaron ignored the condoms as he leaned forward to grab the lube. He slicked up his fingers and smeared a little on his cock. Spencer wanted it rough. While they had not talked about this instance exactly, Spencer had talked about the time he had gone to the club for just this reason, a hard fuck that made him near pass out. It had taken a lot longer for Spencer to get to that point and Aaron knew that it was having him in his life that stopped it from happening.

Aaron wasn't gentle as he pushed his two fingers into Spencer, but Spencer just thrust down as much as he could. He shuddered as Aaron found his prostate. Aaron pulled his fingers free when he was sure that Spencer was slicked up enough. He pushed Spencer legs up to where his knees were near his head. "Hold."

Spencer grabbed his knees and held them there. It allowed Aaron to grab Spencer's cheeks and spread them to the maximum before he started to push inside of him. Spencer nearly let go of his knees, but he stopped at the last seconds, his fingers tightening up from where they had been becoming lax. Aaron set up a fast and brutal pace as he fucked Spencer.

Neither of them lasted long with the extended foreplay and the near high they had from the drinks consumed. Aaron came first, his cock pushed as far into Spencer as he could get before, he pressed his thumb at the base of Spencer's cock and swept his hand up, making Spencer scream as he came. Spencer slumped into the bed his hands dropping and then his legs. Aaron picked up his legs and wrapped them around his waist as he slowly bent over his lover and looked Spencer in the face. Spencer gave him a feeble smile.

"Are you better now?"
"Mostly."

"Then talk," Aaron said as he settled down on top of Spencer. The door shutting surprised Aaron a little, but he didn't move. He didn't feel anyone else in the room, which was still a shock to him, it was new as hell as Aaron could feel humans as wells as Gods now.

"There are days that I hate men. They feel that because they have cocks that everyone should worship them. It's not even the God in me that hates it, its the fact that I hate that they think women should bow and scrape and do everything that they want because they have a cock. I'm also sick of finding bodies in suitcases and sick to fuck of men who have mother issues, though I guess in this case it was grandmother issues."

"Do you want to take a break?" Aaron asked. He would hate Spencer not being on the team for a few months, but he would understand if Spencer wanted it, teaching at the Academy or just not working for a while. He could get a lot done on his books if he took the break.

"No, I don't...I feel like I can't. There is something coming, and I don't want to leave you alone for it."

"I see. Well, leave a better note next time." Aaron pressed a kiss to Spencer's sweaty forehead before he moved to where he could slip his cock from inside of him and lay down beside him. Spencer's legs let go of him reluctantly and wrapped his arms around him instead. Aaron let Spencer cling to him. They would head home at some point when Spencer was ready to leave the club.

XxXxXxX

Aaron watched Spencer was he puttered around the kitchen. He knew that Spencer did not have the gift of prophecy just enough knowledge of time to understand how it passed and how things repeated if Aaron understood Spencer's spiel on it one.

"So, what has you upset?" Spencer asked as he turned around with a grill fork in his hands. Aaron had wondered what he was doing. It was October, and they were in the middle of a warm snap. He knew that Jack was near but not where he was exactly, so he assumed given the grill fork that he was in the area where the Dire wolves hung out during the day or up on the roof. It's where the two grills they had were.

"The IRT is gone," Aaron said as he settled his briefcase over the back of the couch and let it drop down tot he cushions.

"Gone? Who the hell is going to take care of American's in trouble in other lands? Or when an American commits a crime in another country?"

"That I am unsure of. I have asked for a meeting with the Director, but so far it seems he's been ducking it. The only thing that Garrett would tell me when I went to find him was that Director Barnes had her eye on the team long before anything happened."

"There is no way that anyone would come after the BAU there are no teams in place at all that could take this over and it would be a political nightmare for them to get rid of us. Think about the backlash from the LEOs across the country, how upset the people would be if they found out that the team that's there to protect them when everything else fails would go over. It could be the end of the Director."

"Oh, I agree, but they can change how we operate. Smaller teams, different cases, not letting us pick the cases we are allowed to take. Dave, Gideon, and Max Ryan were worried about that from the
beginning. They didn't allow anyone to pick where they went, and I'm going to make sure that everyone above me knows what's going to happen, but it's going to start small. What I have found on Director Barnes is damning and horrible. I don't like to use terms like bitch, but it's the only word I have heard from everyone who deals with her. I'm not looking forward to what is coming, but tomorrow I've called the team in early. JJ thinks she will have a case for us, and while we've been asked for a consult, they have not invited us in yet. She hopes that will come tomorrow. I want to warn the team to make sure that we are circumspect in all of our reports for a while. Keep our noses clean."

"And you started with me, the wild card of the team. I won't do anything unless I feel I have to. I'll even stop back talking to the asshole who runs Team D."

"He still giving you issues?" Aaron asked.

"Not for much longer. I did not report him to HR, but the rest of his team has. I have no part of it, though I expect to be pulled into HR for a discussion when I get back from this case if we go."

"What for dinner?" Aaron looked at what was laid out in the kitchen, but there was nothing.

"Steaks, potatoes, baked beans, and fruit. I forgot the fork, so I came down to get it when I saw you pull up. So, I could meet you. Ready to head up? Ghost and Nymeria are not up there. They didn't want to come up with us, but I have it so they can head up that way if they decide they want to."

"Sounds like a party. Who all is here?"

"Just us. The others are flitting away. Jack wanted dinner with us, so I thought that we could do that. He's got a letter from New Haven, but I have no clue what it is. I can't tell if it's good or bad. I can't see him doing anything bad, so I would assume it's good. How good? I have no clue."

"No," Aaron said as he crossed the distance between them. He pulled the fork from Spencer's hand and set it down. "I know that tell. You don't want to admit you think you know what it is because you are afraid that you'll freak me out."

"I got a good look at the books that Jack had been bringing home the past month of school. I think that they want to have him graduate early."

"Why would they do that? I thought that they covered most of the lower college classes there so that kids didn't have to leave early."

"Yes, well Jack's taking a few of those classes, or at least reading about them. We know he's smart, but you've never wanted to have him formally tested. I bet that he's pretty advanced given the stuff he's bringing home."

"I don't want him going to college full time before sixteen."

"No, I agree on that. Let's go see what our son has for us."

Aaron followed behind Spencer as they made their way up, he snagged the fork that he had set down as it seemed that Spencer had forgotten about it again. Which showed how his mind was scattered about what Jack had brought home.

Jack was waiting for them at the door with the letter, already out of the envelope and holding it out. Aaron took hold of it, trading for the fork. Jack rushed to the grill to flip the steaks. Spencer followed behind him.
Jack would run out of classes to take at New Haven the year he turned fifteen. Which would mean starting college just before he turned sixteen. Even that year he was only going to have enough classes to go half a day. That was if Jack took every single art and music class that was offered. Half of the classes what would be his senior year would be art and music while there would be a single science class as well as a history class and the requisite physical education. Aaron looked up at Spencer and nodded his head.

"Is this something you want?" Spencer asked.

"Yes. If I didn't, we were going to drop a class or two here each year so that I could graduate when I was eighteen like everyone else. I was going to be given a chance to work as assistants to a few teachers or even just sit in on art classes as my schedule allowed, but I want this. I'm taking all of the computer classes that New Haven offers. I'm going for a double major of studio arts and graphic design. Uncle Jax has already made sure my computer has the most advanced programs for that."

"I see," Aaron said. He looked at the handwritten note at the bottom that Jack already had pre-acceptance to the school of his choice when he turned eighteen, which was California Institute of the Arts. "And your school?"

Spencer held out his hand for the letter, and Aaron handed it over with ease. Spencer's eyes darted down the page, looking at the words and then the note. His eyes narrowed as he read the note before he looked at Jack, then at Aaron, then up into the sky. "You know that kids can go to class naked there, right?"

"I can be me there. I can take whatever classes I want, no matter what degree I want to actually get."

"How long exactly have you been looking at colleges?" Aaron asked.

"Eight months, I do keep an eye on his Internet stuff. Jackson makes sure that everything on the network is pinged to me in a digest every single day. Including yours and my searches."

"You don't want to visit the school first?"

"They have a virtual tour, and Uncle Jax said that over Winter Break we could all go on a visit before I accept. I have until April to accept. I got offers from a few other schools as well."

Aaron looked at Spencer.

"Most kids who go to New Haven get accepted to schools before they leave. The colleges across the US recruit heavily from there. I'm a little shocked because of Jack's age but not really, if he's graduating two years early. I know a teacher there who I trust to be his watcher on campus. She's a good woman."

"Athena. Yes, she's the one who wrote to the school about me. She's come and talked to the students in my art classes."

"Really?" Spencer asked.

Aaron knew that Athena was going to get a talking to. He wasn't aware that Athena had come out of the closet, so to speak. Though he didn't keep track of that anymore since Spencer had taken it over for the BAU and just keeping an eye on people. Spencer was a hell of a lot better at it.

"She's really cool. Even if she did make a lot of comments about knowing you. Calling you Mimir though."
"And you've not told us about this because?"

"We've had a lot of college recruiters in an out of the school over the past year. It didn't mention any of them because I didn't know what I wanted. I know you two would never push me, but I wanted to figure out what I wanted before I talked to you. I love drawing, I like music enough to take the classes for it to take everything the school offers but I really love art. I want to do graphic design because it's part of the future of the world at the moment and it would allow me to do art for fun and not have to do it and push myself to earn money."

Jack hugged both of them before going over to the corner where Aaron saw his drawing pad was set up. His son wasn't even twelve yet. Yet he already knew what he wanted to do with his life. Though Aaron had known he had wanted to be a lawyer since the first time that his father had hit him. Aaron wanted to be the person to protect people from men like his father. He could understand Jack knowing what he wanted. He could understand it a great deal. He would support Jack in whatever he wanted. Even if that took him across the country where at the moment Aaron couldn't follow.
Chapter 45

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Liars will do anything to sell their story. Braggarts will go down with their own name on this lips. Some humans will do almost everything to make it seem like they are more significant than they really are. Then there are those who decide that they know what is best for something that has worked for a long time, and they try and wreck that something. I have seen them all the time. I see the ripples around a person. I see the people who think that their way is the only way and it's how it's going to go.

I do adore taking them down.

January 2018

Aaron tossed another file into the outgoing files and looked up as someone entered his office. He smiled at Spencer, but Spencer wasn't smiling. He had a single sheet of paper in his hand that he tossed down onto Aaron's desk. He put a spin on it that had it landing perfectly to where Aaron could read it.

"Already?" Aaron asked.

"Yes. I'm to meet her for lunch."

"I'll get in contact with Mateo to warn him. He doesn't like her doing this at all. Have Callahan fit you with that wire that we are testing for Grimes Tech, please." Aaron looked at the email again. It was couched as a request, but Aaron could read the order in it as well.

Given that Aaron's unit did not typically do undercover or surveillance equipment as it's meant to be used, they are testing the feedback and range on a few much better recording devices to replace the standard that most wore when getting words from people without them knowing. So at least one member of the BAU had been wearing one each time they talked to witnesses. While the content did not go back to Grimes Tech, a report did that was made by an analyst.

"You got it. I need to get ready to leave if I am going."

"Oh, you are, and you are going to record every single second of it."

Aaron cleared his desk of things that he wouldn't need, and he found what he did need, the files that Mateo had given him about a few cases that Director Barnes had worked before she had become a cog in the machine, not really cut out for fieldwork it seemed.

Aaron, Dave, and Prentiss all piled into an SUV, loaded with the receiver for Spencer's mike. There was just enough range on the device that they could park behind the place that Barnes wanted to meet Spencer. It was a very strange place to meet.

"Director Barnes?" Spencer's voice was loud and clear over the comm unit. It was like Spencer was right beside him.

"God Reid, thank you for meeting me. I've tried for a week to narrow it down to when you can meet with me but the times that you have marked free on your internal work calendar are not for me. So I
"I've already eaten as I don't like the food of this place that much. I don't like burgers that aren't home cooked, and the rest of the menu is sandwiches, and I get a lot of them while on cases."

Aaron heard a noise and then a few seconds later Spencer telling someone thank you. Aaron knew that Spencer did not eat there except with Prentiss, and he usually got a salad and stole a few of Prentiss's french fries and her pickle spear from her plate.

"So what is this meeting about?"

"Well, I have wanted to ask you why you have never applied to fill any of the positions that have opened up as team leads for other teams."

"I have no want to lead. I'm quite happy to stay on the sidelines and be a little more free with my time. I have a lot of hobbies, and they take time to keep up, and I would hate to have to give up a single one of them."

"I see."

Aaron looked at Dave and Prentiss to see that they were silently laughing. Aaron was trying not to laugh.

"Then I guess I am meeting with the wrong person. Thank you, God Reid. Since you are not eating, you can leave."

"You got it, Ma'am. So no threat to keep this to myself."

"Excuse me?" Barnes asked.

"Well, obviously you are trying to talk someone into being your little pasty in an effort to oust Hotch from his position of team lead, and I have no clue why you would go to me. Hotch is one of the best people in the world to me. He helped me get my feet in this job when Gideon just dumped me into it without any help. I also don't understand why you thought you could dance a ring around a God who knows as much about psychology as I do and that I wouldn't read your intentions. The thing is that you are not my direct superior in any way. I have a different chain of command, given that I am a God. So even if you ordered me not to tell anyone, nothing about happen to me if I told and I will be telling so you should make your move now before the rug is pulled out from under you."

"You think you are untouchable?" Barnes asked.

"Not untouchable but you seem to think that you have something on me that would allow you to push me into a unit chief position, even if it's just acting while also holding something over my head. I do wonder what that is. I mean, I'm a damned good chess player. I learned from the best."

Aaron snorted at that. Everyone who knew Spencer would think he was talking about Gideon, but Aaron was pretty sure that Spencer was talking about the real chess masters that were all dead and gone by this point in time.

"You've been living with Agent Hotchner."

"Yes. After his divorce, I bonded with his son Jack, and I was a good helper to allow Hotch time to sleep when he needed it. Our relationship papers have been filed with the correct people. The relationship did not fully start until after he was already a New God, and Agent Rossi has been the person doing my evals since he took over the team. He was the best versed in it, and since Rossi
chose not to take over a lead position in any way, Aaron tried to give up some of his work so that he could spend more time with his son."

There was nothing for a good minute on the end of the wire, so Aaron thought that maybe something had happened until there was the sound of a mug being set down really hard.

"You are a cocky son of a bitch, aren't you God Reid? Think you are untouchable. You'll find out different when everything you have ever done will be called into question. I've read your file. The men and women you hunt seem to end up dead at your hand."

"Every single time that I have killed, I have been cleared. You think that you bringing those back up will scare me? You don't know what fucking fear is, Director Barnes. It's sitting in the middle of a darkened ER with a maniac with an ego that I think wouldn't even touch yours, who is hell-bent on taking out everyone around you has you bound on the floor. It's knowing that if your shot doesn't go through his head and take out his brain and his nerves and reflexes first, he's going to fire his weapon with his death seizure and possibly kill innocents who were just in the wrong place at the wrong time. It's meeting up with an Old God that others have whispered about and knowing that he's going to kill your teammate if you don't get her away from him. It's facing down an UnSub who has entered the home of your boss to kill him or maim him or something and knowing that if you don't stop him, he's going to hurt a lot as he has already killed a lot of people." The sound of scraping came over the comm like a chair on tile or hardwood, Aaron couldn't tell which. "I don't look at you and see fear. I look at you and see pity. You think the only way to add your name to the FBI ranks is to bust down the New God of the FBI? You are a scared, pathetic creature who wants your name in lights and everyone worshiping at your feet as the person with the answers. Well, Ma'am, that won't be the BAU. Have a good day."

Aaron waited until he heard the beep that signaled that Spencer had turned off the mike before he put the SUV in gear and drove to the corner to allow Reid to get into the SUV.

"To DC," Spencer said.

"Okay," Aaron said. He saw that Spencer had his cellphone out and was typing away at it near nonstop. He wondered who was the receiving end of that text.

"Prentiss, Rossi, Aaron, and I will be getting out. You go ahead back, and you work on making sure that Garcia has our files locked down. Make sure the ones that are locked are still locked. Barnes doesn't have access to get into a lot of our files."

"You got it," Prentiss said.

Aaron wasn't shocked when Barnes entered the conference room before nearly everyone else. She looked at Spencer like she was smelling something shitty and Aaron only glared at her. Garcia had already uploaded the audio from the wire to the servers. The doors opened again, and only the Director of the FBI stepped into the room. The door was shut, and Aaron watched as he pressed a button on the wall to make sure no devices outside of the room could hear inside.

"Thank you all for meeting with me. Director Barnes, please. Can you tell me why we are here?"

"Well, Sir. I am unsure. I did have a meeting with God Reid, but I am unsure why we were all pulled into his meeting."

Spencer gave her a wicked smile, and Aaron heard the change in the atmosphere in the room as Dave figured out that Spencer was out for blood.
"God Reid, why are we here?"

"Director Barnes wants to replace Agent Hotchner as the head of the BAU, even just temporarily. She met with me today, outside of work, to try and talk me into taking over when she ousted him."

"The BAU has come under review after a few things that have happened lately," Barnes said.

"Like what? An UnSub targeting me because I put her in jail? Another being seduced by her after I stopped her father a decade ago from killing two boys so she could get revenge for the death of her friend? The near-kidnapping of two children close to me?"

Aaron laid a hand on Spencer's arm, and he took over speaking. "Which one of those is the fault of anyone on this team? We cannot control what the UnSubs we hunt do to get revenge. We can't even stop them. Foyet made a target of this team. Bale made a target of this team. If you start to hold the team accountable for the people that we piss off while doing our job, then there would not be a single person who could work this team."

"The BAU needs to change focus to survive in the world that is being built in this world of technology."

"Oh, that's your angle?" Spencer asked.

"God Reid, please. I would not have asked Barnes to look at the BAU if I didn't think there was something wrong there. Something needs to be done, whether it's the type of cases that are being chosen by the teams or the make up the teams themselves."

"Why is Barnes setting up meetings with people from the BAU outside of the building and does not tell the Section or Unit Chief about it?" Dave asked.

The Director, at least, looked a little upset at that. He looked at Barnes.

"I was going to be instilling God Reid as the Acting Unit Chief of the BAU while I worked on figuring out who was going to be the best to be dropped into that position for a while. God Reid has shown that he doesn't allow anything to get in his way of doing the job. His report of Agent Gideon was instrumental in having Gideon removed from the team. He did that to his mentor."

"You are a shit profiler," Spencer said. He stood up and walked over to the tray that had a carafe of coffee on it as well as a pitcher of water. He made up three cups of coffee quickly and walked them back, handing on to Aaron and then one to Dave before taking a sip of the third. "I didn't look at Gideon as anything other than a broken toy. Agent Hotchner and Agent Morgan were the two that taught me everything that I know about being a Profiler and an Agent of the FBI. I would have thrown Gideon under a bus after the issues with Bale and Gideon not seeking the help that he needed to not get the team killed. Agent Gideon was burned out, and he was a danger to the team. These two situations are nothing alike."

Dave was looking at Spencer like he was seeing him for the first time. Which it really was. This was one of the first time that Dave was meeting Mimir. The judge who made no decisions based on anything but facts and the impact on life around the people affected. Barnes was looking at Spencer like he was an alien who revealed himself. The Director looked a little worried.

"What kind of cases would you like the BAU to take?" the Director asked.

"Their job is to make the FBI look good for the public. They need to take cases that reflect that."

Aaron looked at the Director because that was never what the BAU was about. There were other
units who were the ones in the national spotlight. The terrorism units, child abduction, and other people who were there for making headlines to make sure the country knew that the FBI was watching out for them. The BAU was a scalpel to excise small sections of cancer in the country. Locally, wherever that was for the case, was going to look at them, but it wasn't the whole country with their eyes on them. Aaron looked at Dave to see that he looked shocked speechless, which was a feat. Spencer though looked like he had a retort ready of some kind. He looked at Aaron and waited for Aaron to not before he opened up his mouth.

"So what happens in six months?"

"Excuse me?"

"So what's going to get airtime? A young socialite in Texas who has been kidnapped and ransomed or an Angel of Death who had killed seven at a nursing home that serves mainly lower class citizens?"

"I would, of course, have you go to Texas."

"The goal of the BAU is to stop as many deaths as we can. The more pressing need is the Angel of Death. The thing is that the LEOs across the country know what cases we take and what ones we don't. It won't take long at all for them to figure out that we are not taking cases based on need by politics. The last person who tangled with the BAU and put politics first was ousted, Director Barnes, think about that."

"Director Barnes, your task at the BAU is over," the Director said as he stood up. He looked at Aaron and at Dave before looking at Spencer. "God Reid, what is your position on the disbanding of the IRT."

"Considering that I don't know all of the aspects of it, I do have this one thing to say. I was on a case with then Section Chief Erin Strauss. She scolded a LEO like a child because while she was the boss, she had not ever gone out with the team to work a case. Her replacement has come out on at least one case with each team a year since he has taken over. Director Barnes has never gone on a case with the BAU or the IRT, so I have to wonder how she understands at all how the teams work or the job that we do. We get into the minds of killers. We touch that darkness, and we step back from it. Do we have issues sometimes? Yes. We don't buck the rules to throw it in the face of the FBI, but we do what we think is the best. Maybe someone who goes out one a case with each team should be the one to actually make the decisions. Even someone from a unit like ours would work. Those who had not been in the field for a long time really have no place to make a decision about what we do in the field."

"Thank you, God Reid. Agent Rossi, God Reid, Director Barnes, if you would step outside. I think that it would be best discussed with Agent Hotchner alone."

Aaron nodded at Spencer and Dave as they stood up. Aaron leaned back in his chair before he took another sip of his coffee. Spencer had made it perfect without tasting the brew, which was a bit stronger than usual, yet there was the ideal amount of cream and sugar for how Aaron had been taking his coffee.

"I see you sitting here one day, Hotch."

"Yes, Sir. One day when I'm tired of what I am doing, but I don't think that will be for a long time. I don't think that I will be happy anywhere else for a very, very long time."

"Yes, the few people I have talked to said that as well. What do you think of God Reid's
"I think that he's right. Strauss didn't care to learn what it was like in the field, hunting things that hunt back and have no morals. Mateo Cruz at least knows what it's like. We are a very different unit than others, and I try and make sure that every single team does things that aren't going to put them at risk, but no UnSub operates the same, so there is no one size fits all. An agent like Barnes does not like having a rule book that is so vague when it comes to units. She thinks it makes us rogues. There is a reason that agents are not brought onto the team before they have been in the FBI around eight years. The stupid shit is all out of them. God Reid was not my choice, and while I see what Gideon saw in him and while we are lovers, I don't think that I would have ever allowed him on the team if I had a choice in that back then. We had a lot of issues."

"He seems to be doing well."

"He tried several times to get me to let him leave after Gideon left, but I didn't because there was a single reason that he wanted to leave."

"Which was?"

"If he had wanted to leave because he truly wanted it, I would have transferred him where he wanted. Instead, though he wanted to leave to make my life easier, that's when I knew he was where he needed to be." Aaron looked at the Director, and he thought for a few seconds about a few things. "What do you know about Mimir?"

"Richmond has assured me that he is not a threat that he makes sure to keep as many Old and New Gods as he can in line. I trust that Richmond has an idea who he really is and is trying not to get beheaded."

"Beheading is a weapon of choice for Mimir. He is also just as happy to put a bullet in your head."

"Your team has profiled who he is?" The Director looked very, very happy about that.

Aaron hoped that Spencer forgave him for what he was about to do.

"Yes, well, we had no hand in finding out who he was. He came out to the team in phases. The first was when George Foyet knew when none of the rest of us did that Spencer was not a New God but an Old God. He had a few words that I would never repeat in polite company. I was shocked. As time went on as some found out, Spencer came out to the rest of the team. He's happy hiding as the New God of Psychology, and really he could pass as a New God of anything he wanted to. He chose to stay hidden because I think he really doesn't want anything of the fame that his journals have given him."

"So that man in Florida, that was smited by the God who was using that other man?"

"That was Spencer. The only time we have lied on paperwork is to protect that secret, but if push came to shove, Spencer would come out to you and others. I am forcing the hand right now because I don't want someone else stepping into the BAU and thinking that they can change it. I will leave the FBI, Sir. I'll leave and not look back."

"That would destroy the FBI."

"Yes, Sir. It would. I would do it though to make sure that this team does what it's supposed to do. We go after the darkest, most horrible enemies that the regular people of this country have to face. I will not bow down to political maneuverings that try and make this unit the face of the FBI. The BAU was not made for that. They worked in the background, being in the spotlight locally, but that
was it. He didn't want to make national headlines all the time.

"I'll make sure that if something like this comes up again that someone better suited, without an agenda, is put into place to maintain it." The Director stood up, and he paused as he turned around, turning back to Aaron. "How did Gideon miss it?"

Aaron had no problem figuring out what he meant with that question. "Because Spencer's a chameleon. We all see what he wants us to see. He played a scared New God with Gideon, and it was all that Gideon wanted to see, Sir. He didn't want Gideon to see him for what he was, and so Gideon did not. I've seen Mimir a lot, more so lately but that's because this team has been on a knife's edge for a while."

"Do you see a moment in time where he comes out as what he truly is?"

"As life stands right now? No. He's happy without the publicity. I find that he doesn't like the small fame he has as the God of Psychology in the BAU. He's gone out of his way to hide. He's not going to come out unless he has to. He's content where he is, and he will be for a long time."

"Okay. Make sure that you and your media liaison make up a packet just in case. Shit happens, we know that better than most. I want our asses covered if it's ever revealed that he is Mimir."

"On a legal standpoint, he's fine. I know that. He's meticulous."

"Good. Go and calm down your team after this. I'm sure that shit's happening in Quantico."

"Yes, Sir." Aaron stood up and drained his cup of coffee before he waited for the Director to leave before he left as well. Spencer was standing there outside the door, and he was looking at the back of the Director as he walked toward his office.

"So that cat is out of the bag, huh?" Spencer asked with a grin on his face.

"Yes. I wanted him to make sure that he understood the hell that would come down on him for letting anyone like Barnes near my section again."

"Oh, Aaron, that was arousing as hell. Want to find a bathroom?" Spencer winked to show he was joking, but there was a burn in his eyes that said that Aaron wasn't going to get much rest that night. Aaron was okay with that. He protected his things an right now the BAU was his, Spencer was his. He wasn't letting either go without a fight.
Worship of Gods is still something that many hold as something to kill for, even though the Gods walk among them. I blame that on the Gods themselves. There are a few who walk around and act high and mighty, and they need to just roll the fuck over and show the Humans what they are like. Do I have worshipers? Yes, I do, but they actually hold that I am one of many Gods and they pray to me above others because of their thirst for knowledge. The BAU has come across a good bit of devout followers of a few Gods and every single time I've beat their fucking ass.

I am knowledge. I am the tie that binds the world together. Those who fear me are the ones who brought about the Dark Ages and are trying to shove us back into one. I kind of want to kill every single one of them, but I don't because above all things, I believe in free will. I also don't listen too much to gossip among Gods. That's probably how I get myself into situations like this.

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Aaron had an AR-15 in hand. He didn't feel like he needed a handgun. There were too many people around as well, so that meant that he could use more bullets than the gun could hold if he kept his standard gun on. So he and Prentiss had the heavy weapons. Aaron didn't want to kill anyone, but the fucking cult people were holding Spencer hostage, wanting to sacrifice him. Aaron was still pissed that Spencer had let the cult people take him. He probably could have got him and Garcia free, but then Aaron hadn't been there at the time to know that for sure. Spencer would never do anything that would harm Garcia, and it was probably why they had been allowed to be taken.

Spencer had made sure that Garcia had got free. He had made sure that the BAU had everything that was needed to track where they were holding Spencer. Aaron just hadn't expected there to be this many people.

"Cyrus liked you," Merva said as he looked at Spencer with a fond look on his face. "Even though you are a New God, he liked you. He wrote letters and mailed them to those who were out of the area. You changed our minds on who we worship. You made us see that we needed to worship knowledge and not someone who feeds us information when they want. Knowledge is neither evil nor good. It's all in how it's used. So you will be our final sacrifice to the God Mimir."

Spencer snorted, and Aaron wanted to as well, but at the moment, no one knew that he and the team were there to save Spencer. The rest of the team stayed quiet as well. Which was all good because Aaron did not want to have to explain more than what those already knew.

"Did you know that New Gods can worship Old Gods?" Spencer asked. His eyes darted across the people assembled before settling down right on Aaron. He gave Aaron a wicked little smile before he turned to look at Merva again. "There are classes to the New Gods, and many of us happily work together with Old Gods. I'm a God who knows a lot about Psychology. I strive to learn every single little thing that has been put out about it. Mimir and I are close."

"Then he'll be happy with your sacrifice. He can take in your knowledge."

"Are you really that fucking stupid?" Spencer asked.

Aaron felt something very, very weird happening, and he wasn't sure what it was. He looked around
before pulling his phone and texting the team. He wanted them to keep an eye out. Callahan was the agent closest to him. She looked at her phone when it vibrated and then looked at Aaron and nodded.

"Mimir learns by knowledge being shared, you fucking idiot. By it being written down, in the old days, it was having the stories transmitted through stories. He's the origin of the storyteller. He would walk about and tell tales, teach people anything that they wanted. He's going to be fucking pissed that all of you did this and he's going to kill you. Let me go, and I'll make sure he doesn't get revenge."

"No," Merva said.

"Then you are a fucking idiot."

There was the sound of thunder rolling across the area they were in. There was nothing about a storm being anywhere close.

"Say hello to the rest of the sinners in hell." Spencer looked at Merva, and then a bolt of lightning hit his body. It was gone. Disintegrated right before their eyes. Spencer stepped off the small platform they were holding him on, and then behind him was a shadowy figure. Spencer's eyes started to glow, and his body shuddered as the shadowy figure laid a hand on his head.

Aaron wasn't sure what the hell was going on, but the worshipers who had been more than willing to kill Spencer were dropping to their knees and looking at the shadowy figure with near-fanatical love in their eyes, the few that Aaron could see.

"You!" Spencer said. There was a second voice inside of it, and Aaron wondered if that was his Mimir voice. The one that he used to do interviews that always sounded like there was more there than everyone thought. "You who tried to kill a valued child of mine!"

"We are sorry!" the worshipers cried out nearly all at once.

"To show that you are truly sorry, you will surrender and not fight with anyone who comes to take you. You will give yourself up and tell them everything. Every single death you have caused. You will surrender to their judgment." Spencer's body was still, but the shadow behind him was not. It grew bigger and loomed over those who were around them. "I will follow this, and I will cast my revenge on the whole of you from child to adult if a single one of you refused to give up all the crimes you have committed."

Thunder cracked across the area again, and lightning lit up the sky to make it seem almost like daytime before the whole area was plunged into darkness. The lights and fires that had been giving off light were gone, gutted by Spencer's power. Aaron grabbed the night vision goggles that they had grabbed just to be safe. The worshipers were all on their knees, praying to Mimir. Aaron kept his thoughts to himself on that. He looked for Spencer and saw him still standing there with glowing eyes, and something was moving behind him.

"I AM MIMIR, AND I NEVER HAVE AND NEVER WILL ALLOW SACRIFICES IN MY NAME!" Spencer collapsed after that, and the lightning shot down again, and then thunder rumbled. Aaron got his goggles off just seconds before the lights and fires flared back to life.

The worshipers were all knocked out it seemed. There were bodies dropped everywhere. Aaron walked slowly forward to check the pulse of the first, it was slow like they were drugged but strong.

"All clear," Aaron said.

"Fucking hell," one of the local officers with them said.
Aaron ignored him and the others that were all talking around him, and he walked right to Spencer, who was not asleep like he was acting but playing his part in all of this. Aaron checked his pulse, pressing harder than needed.

"I've read Mimir's books," one of the locals said she stepped up behind Aaron. She had a bag in her hand, and Aaron recognized it as Spencer's go-bag that had been in the back of the SUV Aaron had driven to where they were. "Your Agent Jareau handed this to me and said that she would be coming back with food."

"He's going to be hungry, hosting an Old God like that kind of makes it feel like he's human and ran two seventeen mile running marathons back to back with no rest." Aaron listened to the officers and other agents around him confirm that all of the worshipers were asleep. Aaron wondered how much Spencer was going to eat after this display of power.

"I've never heard of that before."

"I have seen it once, and it was a potential New God who had taken in the power of an Old God. It was horrific and kind of scary. It was the first time that I had seen an Old God smite someone."

"That's what that was?"

"Yes," Aaron said. He stood up and looked around to find a place where Spencer could change when he decided to stop faking like he was asleep.

"I don't think I've ever seen him so still," Callahan said as she stepped up.

"He usually isn't ever this still. His fingers or his eyes are usually moving." Aaron saw where he wanted them to go, and if it was like Spencer was reading his mind, he heard him groan. Aaron looked down to see Spencer's eyes moving behind his eyelids like his brain was waking up before his body. Aaron crouched down and brushed at the loose hair on his forehead. He was covered in sweat, so the hair stuck.

"Hey, beautiful," Aaron said.

Callahan laughed, and she nearly fell over with it when Spencer raised up a shaky hand and flipped Aaron off.

"Only you would attempt to get sacrificed by worshipers to your favorite God. How did that feel?"

"Like I had stuck my cock in where a light bulb needed to go."

"Well, his filter is broke ain't it?" Dave asked as he stepped up. He dropped a bar of Spencer's favorite chocolate on his chest. "Eat that and stop being crass."

"Love you too, Rossi."

The tension in the area broke. Spencer pushed himself up to a sitting position and looked around at the bodies that were all around him. He didn't look scared.

"Mimir didn't kill them."

"No, I know. He wouldn't. There would be no one to spread what he did if he killed them all." Spencer ripped the wrapper off the bar and ate it in three bites, chewing as fast as he could. There was a cup held out in front of him, and that was JJ with that cup. Aaron saw that it was from that place where they had stopped after landing to get com caffeine in them. JJ had said she needed a lot,
but it seemed that she had been planning all along to give it to Spencer. Spencer took it and chugged the coffee. Aaron settled down on the ground, setting his gun down and pulling Spencer into him.

"You are cold," Aaron said as he touched Spencer's skin.

"I'll take me a bit to get back to temperature with the power that Mimir sapped from me for that shadow and light show." Spencer turned his face and pressed it to Aaron's skin.

Aaron didn't like how cold he was. Aaron looked down at the gun and then at Prentiss, who was walking up to them with Dave right behind. Callahan and JJ were right there already.

"I'm going to get Spencer to get him changed. You guys make sure that the worshipers are all accounted for once someone starts to wake up."

"They won't for hours. I wouldn't be shocked if it was at least four hours. I'm cold, Aaron." Spencer sounded like a child at that moment.

"Let's get you changed. Dried off and into new clothes. JJ bring that bag with food into the little area over there." Aaron pointed with his head before he started to stand up, pulling Spencer with him. He was like a lump, he didn't seem to have control of his limbs. Aaron chose to pick him up into a bridal carry to go to the tent area. It had a roll-away bed in the middle and Aaron laid Spencer down on it, he tried to pull Aaron down with him, but Aaron resisted. JJ was right there on his heels with the food and the go-bag. She dropped them down and looked at Spencer.

"I'll make sure no one comes in."

"Won't be needed, no one is going to come in anyway."

Aaron looked down at Spencer to see that he looked less wiped out than he had, but still, his eyes were almost dull. Aaron escorted JJ out of the tent area and then turned around. Spencer was naked on the bed. Aaron just stared at him. After a few minutes, Spencer crooked a finger at Aaron to beckon him closer. Aaron felt like someone was pulling him along to stand above Spencer.

"Get naked."

"Spencer this is really not the time. We have worshipers who are asleep out there, LEOs and other agents crawling all over the scene."

"And no one is going to enter here or hear a single thing that is going to go on. I need this, Aaron."

"I'm not Human." Aaron still started to take off his clothing, though. He laid it so that it wouldn't get dirty or wrinkly, any more than it already was. When he was naked, he got on the bed between Spencer's legs, waiting for Spencer to wrap those legs around him before he moved up just that bit more to kiss him. He touched with one hand, the other going under Spencer's head to tip his face more to where Aaron didn't have to strain to get to it. It was like every place that he touched, it got warmer just for a few seconds then was cold again when he came back to it. Aaron started to rock his hips into Spencer's, and he heard the moan that Spencer let out. Aaron really hoped that Spencer was right that no one was going to hear them.

Spencer started to touch after a few minutes of kissing, his hands brushed at Aaron's ribs when were more firm as they swept down his sides. Everywhere that Spencer touched on, Aaron got colder for as long as he was touching it. Like he was leeching Aaron's heat.

"Worship my body, Aaron. Please."
Sex worship, Aaron thought as he started to kiss down Spencer's neck. Spencer let his hand stay still and just brush up Aaron's body as Aaron went down, kissing and licking, tasting dirt and sweat and what felt like pure power under that. Spencer wasn't subtle as a bottle of lube was on the bed between Spencer's legs. Aaron grabbed it as he sat up and slicked up his fingers. He pushed two into Spencer. Aaron was used to Spencer's expressive face as they had sex, but now it was like Spencer was muted. His face didn't move at all until Aaron was finding his prostate. His mouth dropped open, but the big movement was his cock which jumped like it was finally getting into this.

Aaron wiped his fingers on Spencer's stomach to clean them off a little before he moved to push inside of him. Aaron made sure to slick his cock up just as he pushing into Spencer. It was a move of acrobatic nature, but Aaron didn't care. The bed didn't even squeak as Aaron thrust into Spencer hard. Spencer arched his back though, and the hands that had settled on Aaron's shoulders dug in, and Aaron felt blood seeping down his back. He didn't care, though. Aaron moved his arm to where it was braced on the bed to allow him to kiss Spencer before he wiggled his other under Spencer's body to forcibly tilt his hips up to where he could get the depth and angle that he wanted. That they liked.

Spencer murmured words into Aaron's neck as he breathed there. Aaron didn't understand a single one of them, but inside of him, he felt like something was happening. He felt strangely connected to Spencer.

"My Mimir," Aaron said, the words sliding from his lips unbidden. He lost his ability to speak after that. He didn't even fight it as his eyes closed and his head dropped to Spencer's neck. They were like twinned bodies, the reverse of each other. Aaron felt like he was high in the clouds, there was no rough blanket under him, rubbing at his legs. He felt like they were high up in the clouds, fucking on clouds. There was no sound around them except for their own breathing.

The orgasm hit Aaron hard, making him gasp and bite. Spencer's hands were like claws in his back, pulling him in as Spencer spilled between them. Aaron didn't pull away, staying as wrapped around Spencer as Spencer was around him. Time lost meaning to Aaron as he laid there on top of Spencer but didn't even try and roll to the side. He settled in there, waiting for Spencer to push at him.

"Hotch?" a voice called out after a good bit of time.

"We gotta get going," Spencer said.

"Don't want to."

"We gotta though. You might not like it, but you need to make sure the scene is taken care of. I'll come out when I feel like I can."

Aaron pushed up to where he was balanced on his hands, looking down at Spencer. He saw that the glow in Spencer's eyes was pulsing like a slow pulse on a machine that was powering up. He pressed a kiss to Spencer's forehead before getting up. He looked around for something that he could use to clean up before getting dressed but found that he was clean. There was no release on his chest, hell there wasn't even the lube that he had smeared on Spencer on him. It was interesting to see that even his cock was clean. Aaron looked at Spencer.

"God plane sex." Spencer stretched, and the pulsing in his eyes grew just a little bit brighter.
"Communion between Gods. Can't keep me alive but will help me after a big expenditure of power. If I had done one or the other, I would have been fine, but the shadow version of me, the knocking their asses out, and the killing of Merva was too much in a short period of time. I'll be fine in a few the worship of your body to mine is still kind of filing me up."
"Only you could make that sound like a full-on sex act with words."

"It was a sex act," Spencer said. He stretched again, and Aaron felt the surge of power in his body. It made Aaron's hair stand on end all over his body. "Get dressed and go be Hotch. I'll come out and be meek."

Aaron nodded and started to get dressed again. He gave Spencer another kiss before he left the tent. It wasn't that much chaos, but Callahan was standing there. She had a smile on her face.

"The captain is looking for you. I said that you were caring for the God who had been taken, and he agreed that you were doing what you needed. He said he wanted to talk to you."

Aaron nodded.

"Also, you may want to mention that you cleaned up a little."

"Why?" Aaron asked. He looked down, his clothes looked the same.

"You had a smudge of dirt down your cheek and part of your neck, and now it's gone."

"Like Reid would let me keep the mud on myself when I'm around him." Aaron grinned at her as he walked away from her. He found the Captain and walked toward him. The man turned to face him. "Captain Rogers."

"Hotch, thanks for coming to me. Your God, he's taken care of right?"

"Yes. He's fine. He's finishing eating some food and getting a little bit of energy back. Human food helps him rebuild quickly."

"Good. I'm going to pull my people back and have them watch. These people took a Federal Agent, and I understand that, but this is a lot of bodies, and we need containment. There is no one awake but us so I'm going to have teams on the edges watching to make sure no one wakes up and slips away. I have already called for our mass containment vehicles to come and start to cart these people off. I also had the local drunks who sleep in our cells moved to the medical ward of our local jail to sleep off their drinking. Between those cells and a few others, we should have enough room."

"Thank you. We can sort everything much better from there. A local set of agents will be taking over as my main focus was getting my team member back with little loss of life. That's happened, though the loss of life was smaller than I thought it would be. Merva being the only death, was quite shocking."

"Yes. Though when those Old Gods get involved, I've found that work gets harder and easier. Though this is the cleanest, we've had. We've had a God come through and kill a group of pedophiles that we had no clue were trafficking kids around town. I was quite happy about that, but it caused a lot of paperwork."

"I didn't hear about that," Aaron said.

"No, we kept it quiet and covered it up as a mass suicide in the face of getting caught and going to jail. Their computers gave us enough to get rid of those who were not dead, and we forwarded it all to the FBI and the team that handles that kind of stuff. The FBI sanctioned the cover-up just for the fact of keeping it quiet."

"How are you sure it was a God?" Aaron asked.
"He left a calling card. The same one here, Mimir. I had his sigil researched, and it was one that was used for the God of Judgement in Egypt. It was merged with Mimir's symbol from his first role as a God. The research was sound, and the FBI agreed that it was Mimir that had done it. Gods of Judgement doing what our courts refuse to do is okay with me as long as they keep it to that."

"When was this?"

"Seven years ago."

"Damn." Aaron knew that Spencer went places for weekends, especially back then. To visit friends and such but he wondered if that was what Spencer did, acting as Judge and Jury in one fell swoop. It would have been around the time that Jack had been growing even closer to him. "Well, seems you have a patron God in the area."

"No, Mimir goes around the world. I've seen reports from international groups where he's been all over. Even once in Antarctica at a dig site that had a murder happen. He showed up and brought the person to justice before leaving. The only thing that anyone remembered was a shadowy face and a lithe body."

"I'll have to look into that." Aaron turned to look at the tent to see that Spencer was leaving it. He was dressed in a suit that Aaron knew as not in that bag. Probably a way to test his ability to call on the Pixies. He looked around, nodded at Aaron, and then made his way to where JJ and Dave were. He wrapped an arm around JJ's shoulders, and she wrapped one around his waist, making it seem like he was a little worn out.

"He'll be fine, yes?"

"Yes, he will be. We've dealt with something like it before in another person who was used, and Reid checks on him and nothing terrible happened. He'll probably sleep and eat a lot, but he'll be fine in a few days."

"So he's a shock, still," Prentiss said.

Aaron looked around to see that Rogers had left and it was just him and her there. "Yes, yes, he is."

"That was a pretty spectacular show."

"It was a warning. This case is going to make the papers here and then all over. That weird storm he made isn't going to go away and be forgotten about. He did this to make sure that this kind of shit stops happening."

"I've read reports that sacrifices like this have been happening more and more."

"I wouldn't be shocked if those Old Gods that are around come out and make a statement because of this. Or Mimir will make a statement. He's already threatened some of the Gods with their own death if they don't stop the deaths."

"Fuck, and they all know who he is?"

"Oh, I'm sure that they know who Mimir is hiding as but they don't want to piss him off." Aaron wondered if this was going to be the event that heralded in the era of the world, knowing precisely who Mimir was and what he looked like. Aaron wasn't sure that he was ready for it, but like everything else, he would do it and support Spencer while he was going through it all. There really wasn't anything else that Aaron could do about it. He was twined Spencer, and there was no separating them.
Chapter 47

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

Blood is thicker than water. Humans love to think that this is true, but sometimes the bonds made that have no blood between are some of the best and last the longest. Family is someone you can abuse, and you expect them to always be around. When the family goes away because of abuse, they are usually considered outcasts after. They are the ones that have something wrong with them. Not the other way around.

When the family heals itself, there is nothing better. When brothers who have had valleys between them now only have a stream, it's like the world is righting itself. To see, it is something that will stay with you forever.

September 2018

Aaron looked at Jack as he still watched the world move around them. He smiled as he saw Jack’s face light up as they got close to New York. It went from trees and life to brick and stone. Aaron looked at Spencer, who was on the far side of the train car. He had rented out the entire car for their trip up to New York City not wanting to be anyone but himself in it. He was working on a case file for another team in the BAU even though he was supposed to be on vacation with Aaron for the next two weeks.

Two weeks in New York City so that Jack could get to know his Uncle. Sean had been out of jail for a while, but he hadn't wanted Aaron, much less Jack to come up and see him before he was settled in. A month before, Sean had texted Spencer that he was ready. Sean kept in contact with Spencer as his lawyer of record and the ultimate person who was in control of his life. Aaron tried not to be upset about that, but Spencer was much less emotional than Aaron, and he was what Sean needed at that moment.

Adjusting to a life where Sean got to make every single decision for himself had been hard. Aaron had been woken up but a lot of calls from Sean when he was freaking out about what he was doing. Aaron listened in to hear what Spencer told him. Spencer had a specific ring tone that was attached to Sean's number, and no matter what they were doing, Spencer answered it.

Aaron opened his mouth to ask Spencer a question when his phone rang, and it was Sean's ringtone. Jack jumped up and ran over to Spencer, but he didn't say anything.

"Hello," Spencer said. He smiled at whatever Sean said on the other end of the phone. "Yes. We are seventeen minutes from being dropped at the station, and we would gladly pick up the food that you have ordered. Jack's stomach has done nothing but make hunger noises for an hour. He's a growing boy who eats his weight in food every single day."

"HEY!" Jack near screamed, but he was smiling as he did it.

Aaron turned to fully face Spencer and found that he was looking at him as well. Aaron smiled at Spencer, and Spencer smiled back.

"So we can't wait for you to show us your work. I'm glad you were able to take a little vacation."

Sean had to say something funny as Spencer blushed.
"Well, it's my money, and I can do whatever the hell I want, and I wanted to make sure that you weren't running yourself ragged. You've been doing well, Sean and that deserves a treat, even if that is just you spending time with your brother and nephew."

Spencer gave a weird look but kept his mouth shut as it seemed Sean said something he didn't like.

"Well, Sean, I figured that you would hang out with me, but I do have a few things I'm doing the first two days up there. I've not made it up to New York City in a while as I've not been making my longer trips on weekends anymore. So I'm going to clear up all the personal things that I need to take care of before I get to enjoy my vacation. I had planned on heading up early, but Jack had a school function that he had forgot to tell us about that I did not want to miss. I think some time with just the Hotchner men would be better. You don't have to perform for me. Yes, I am looking forward to spending time with you and getting to know you as you are now."

Spencer smiled and shook his head as Sean seemed to have said something that made him laugh.

"Yes, well I'm sure that New York has changed a little since the last time I was there as a tourist. I am looking forward to taking Jack to Central Park. He's been in some big ones but never any that are that big. I'm sure he will enjoy that as well. Do you feel better now?" Spencer cocked his head to the side, and his features softened. "Good. Then you go and get what you need to get and then before you know it we will descend on you. Now please be good."

Spencer hung up the phone, and Jack rushed across the car to get to him. He dropped into the seat and leaned his head on Spencer's arm. Spencer kind of bumped his head up and down a little making Jack laugh.

"I'm excited to see New York City and to see Uncle Sean."

"I am also looking forward to seeing him. Seeing how he is doing now in his life and if he's happy. He's going to be a little rough, Jack."

"I know. Dad walked me through it all. How he's not good at making a decision anymore, so if he asks me a question, I need to answer him and not tell him that we should do what he wants. That's why Dad gave me the kid's tourist book for the here. Then I made up a list of places that I wanted to go to in order. I will only bring it up if Uncle Sean asks."

"Good." Spencer raised his arm and wrapped it around Jack's shoulder to draw him close. It looked good, and Spencer looked up at Aaron, and the look of love on Spencer's face took Aaron's breath away. He had seen that look a lot over the years, but it always took his breath away. It was so kind and so pure that it was easy to forget that they were both Gods, and it wasn't ever going to end.

Aaron looked back the way that he was facing and waited for the train to start to pull into the station before he began to pack up. Their luggage was going to be the last taken off as it was in the secure compartment, and Aaron would need to be there with his key to the compartment to allow the porters to get it off. Spencer already had them a rental car ready for them, and it should be waiting for them at the area for drop-offs. It was something that generally Aaron would not have done, but he understood with the luggage that they had for the two weeks off, it was needed.

"Did you finish up the school work for the next two days, Jack?" Spencer asked as he slipped his phone into his pocket and started to stand. Aaron could see him moving around as the train began to brake.

"Yes."
"Good."

The trip had been scheduled for just a few days but then New Haven had an issue where their pipes busted, like nearly all of them, so the whole school was going to be closed while crews worked around the clock to fix things. The work that the students would have done had been rounded up and sent home with them. Lectures and various things like that were pushed around, and the school didn't think that the kids would have to take off for anything. A few of the teachers had gone ahead and were recording their lectures and uploading them to the website so the kids could watch them when they wanted.

Spencer had spent a while looking at a lot of the lectures that had nothing to do with Jack and making notes before emailing the teachers. Aaron still wasn't sure that Spencer wasn't lying about the fact that he had not corrected any of them. He couldn't prove it of course, but he really hoped that Spencer didn't insult a single one of them. It would not do good to make Jack's stay there be a point of contention.

The three of them were ready as soon as the train was stopped, Aaron was going to go and grab the luggage while Spencer and Jack secured a trolley for them to use to get their things off. The porters were lovely and were very kind, and Aaron didn't mind waiting until they were done with everyone else's things to get to him. The secure compartments were new to a lot of trains and were made with Gods in mind, and some law enforcement officers who wanted to travel but not carry their guns up with them. It was very nice, and Aaron would gladly wait a while to get his things.

Before Aaron knew it, he was in the passenger seat of the sporty SUV that Spencer had rented for their use. It was just big enough for them to fit in but also fit their luggage. Aaron was glad that Spencer didn't mind driving as Aaron hated driving in New York. Aaron's eyes watched the city pass them by with Jack in the back making noises of happiness at seeing things. It made Aaron's heart swell that Jack was so happy. They didn't travel that much outside of the states that surrounded DC mainly because Aaron and Spencer traveled a lot for the job so going places was different when a horrific case was added to the memories of that city. There would be a day when they could, but at least New York wasn't that bad.

Boston was a city that Aaron really never wanted to go to again.

"So I saw something interesting when I was looking around for things for us to do and I think it will be fun, so I bought tickets for it. Private box in the lower bowl."

"Lower bowl?" Aaron asked. He scrunched up his nose and wondered what the hell they would do that involved them in a box in a lower bowl.

"Hockey?" Jack asked.

Aaron shook his head. After the Capitals had won the Stanley Cup in June, Jack had been wanting to see a game. Aaron had seen a few games here and there. The few bits of politics that he had to engage in had him sometimes going to games with other members of the FBI. He knew that Spencer followed the sport in a very standoffish way. He had been rooting for the Vegas Golden Knights to keep up with his thing of being Spencer Reid, Vegas born and raised. Morgan had even bought him a hat when it had been outed that he was a fan. He had been so happy when Vegas had made it as far as they did.

It was one of those things that Aaron wasn't sure if Spencer just didn't realize that he never talked about liking hockey or it was something that he thought that it wouldn't be up the real Spencer Reid's alley. Aaron could see it being up Mimir's alley though. It was violence and control, all wrapped in one. The ability to follow the puck and other things made it a sport that Spencer had to watch.
carefully to see it all. Dave had fun with it and had presented them with sort of matching jerseys. Meaning that Spencer had one for Vegas that was the goalie's while Aaron's was the Capitals. Jack had been given a smaller version of the goalie jersey for the Capitals.

"Yes, hockey. We are pretty close to the Islanders' box. I think we will have fun even if it's not the Capitals or the Knights." Spencer was smiling, and it made Aaron smile.

The trip was only mostly silent to get the food as Jack chattered in the back about the people that he was seeing and the fun things that he wanted to do when he saw no one interesting. Aaron's eyes watched Spencer as he looked at people and things as he drove. Aaron was looking forward to having two weeks off with his family. He was looking forward to maybe finally having his brother in his life in a way that meant something.

"You okay?" Jack asked from the back seat.

Aaron looked back at him to see that Jack was looking at him.

"Yes, I'm okay. I'm really good, actually. I'm just excited to get to see Sean." Aaron knew that Jack couldn't understand the tenseness that had been between them. Aaron wanted a relationship with Sean, and he wanted to make sure that Sean knew that he was proud of him. Aaron was insanely proud of him for making it through what he had made it through but also had come out on top despite what he had endured while in prison. Aaron had made sure he had everything that he needed to make it through prison with his dignity as intact as it could be.

Spencer parked the car and got out to get the food. He had cash in hand to give to the person, and Aaron wondered if Sean had figured out that he wasn't going to be paying for a single thing. Though Sean should have maybe already paid by debit card. That had been something that Spencer made sure that Sean had when he got out. He had a little cash to get him started, and it had come out of his checks a little bit at a time, but it was enough for him to get clothes and other things. The trip here though, Spencer was going to make sure that it was all paid for by him. Aaron was pretty sure that Spencer was going to bully Sean into accepting it as well.

To Spencer, money was a tool used when he could. He spent it like he was breathing, but he had more than enough to rule the world but just kept it on hand just in case it was ever needed. Aaron had no clue what that kind of money would ever be needed for, but he didn't fight it. The money they made as FBI agents were put into an account that all of their bills were paid from directly as well as the debit card that Jessica had access to so she didn't have to spend her money on Jack. Then there was the black credit card that was paid from Mimir's account at the bank that protected all of the Gods the world over. It seemed that the bank had been slowly moving through the shadows to become one of the biggest and best, and it actually took care of its customers and kept the Gods and their money safe.

Aaron had been shocked at the hub of it that was in DC where Spencer had transferred all of his items. There were gold bars, gemstones, a few that Aaron was sure were not around and had never been seen before by humans, coins from ages that were long gone. There was even pirate treasure, which Aaron found funny more than anything else.

"Are we ready?" Spencer asked when he got back into the SUV. He handed the food back to Jack, who unbuckled to be able to grab the food and settle it on the areas to either side of him, so it was safe before he buckled back up.

"Yup!" Jack popped the P in the word and looked like he was ready to break into the food.

"Wait, did he order that much?"
"Yes. He remembered seeing me, and you ate in that interrogation room and made sure that he got enough. He said that if he had leftovers, it would be good for breakfast. He also asked what my favorite place to eat was, and I told him, so he ordered from there."

"You love being indulged, don't you?"

"I think after being alive as long as I have and dealing with the shit that I have dealt with, yes." Spencer was smirking as he said it.

Aaron looked around when Spencer started to act like he was trying to find a place to park. It had not taken long at all for Spencer to get them from the restaurant to where Sean lived. It was a lovely area, and the restaurant was there and looked busy. He knew that it wasn't good to have Sean be indulged in getting a vacation so quick, but Jack had been asking about him for weeks. It wasn't a secret when Sean got out. So the whole thing with the school going on a vacation that soon had just been a perfect excuse to do it. The team needed the break after a long summer that seemed to have deaths after deaths.

"No. No! NO!" Spencer yelled.

Aaron took off, running from where he was reading on the couch in Sean's apartment. It was a huge one that had enough rooms for them to stay over so Spencer had asked and Sean had gladly let them it seemed.

"Spencer?" Aaron asked, but he saw that Spencer was standing in the living room on the phone. Sean was eating a bowl of cereal. He kept weird as hell hours with his job, so he slept when he was tired and stayed awake when he wasn't. He was currently staring at Spencer like he was enthralled. Sean was nowhere near bisexual like Aaron, but at that moment, he looked a little in lust with Spencer.

"I don't give a shit what you think you have. If you publish that as it stands, I will sue you for libel. I will make sure that you never find a job even writing tag lines on memes on the Internet."

Spencer hung up the phone, and Aaron realized that it was his Mimir voice. Spencer reached out, grabbed the cordless phone that was in Sean's apartment. He started to dial a number as Sean finished off his bowl of cereal. Sean went to the kitchen and grabbed a banana before he peeled it and handed it to Spencer. Spencer shoved nearly the whole thing into his mouth and started to chew. Sean rinsed out his cereal bowl before walking over to stand by Aaron.

"So...I know that voice."

"Sean," Aaron said as he closed his eyes and ran his hand over his face.

"I won't say a damned thing, Aaron. He's an asshole, and he scares the shit out of me. I read those books when I was in prison. The whole set is there. I don't know if the Warden thought it would straighten some of us out or someone donated them. I wanted to understand you more. What you were going through. The differences I saw in you since I had seen you that year that Spencer joined the team to when I saw you in New York here. You were vastly different but also strangely the same. It said you were working on that path from the moment that you decided to become an FBI agent."

"I need a gag order on an asshole at the New York Times who covers the Gods. I can't even remember his name. He thinks that he has the origin marked on how to stop Humans from becoming Gods and how to kill them and he wants to publish it. He found my work cell phone number and
called me to tell me that I could get in on it since I was here in New York, and he would keep my name out of it."

"For fuck's sake." Aaron looked around for his cell phone. He had no clue where it had ended up. He didn't need to keep it on himself at all times since he wasn't on call at all, but he had wanted to bring his work cell with him just in case. He found it buried under a stack of books on the coffee table.

"Yes, Sir. I'll gladly march down and stick my foot up his ass, but that won't actually do anything. I do like to keep myself hidden as Mimir from the world, and I would rather keep that for a long time. You need to make sure this shit doesn't come out because what it's going to do is stir up the religious assholes who already hate all of us, and it's going to get Humans killed. I see it every single day in my job, Humans hating other Humans because they think they might become a New God. Instead of conversion therapy places for those who are not straight, we are going to end up with ones for those who others think they are on the path to becoming a New God and they are going to be tortured. No one wants me to release my word on it all to the world as it's going to do more harm than good."

Spencer was silent as he listened to whatever whoever he was talking to had to say. He smiled after a minute and gave a small laugh before he nodded his head and then agreed before saying goodbye. He turned and looked at Sean.

"Don't even," Sean said with a grin on his face. "I would rather die than reveal who you are. You love my brother beyond all reason, and I might not understand why someone like you would love someone like him, you do. It would hurt Aaron, and it would hurt Jack if I ever did anything like that to you. Though I do have to wonder why him after Mimir hasn't had a lover for a long time since the lover mentioned in passing the memoirs."

"Because I am that lover. I was killed and taken from him. He killed the God who did that not too long ago. Killed him so he can never threaten me again. I was reborn and shoved into his path as well the path to become a God again. Of the same shit just a little different."

Sean looked between them both before he just shook his head.

"You know I know that reality is stranger than fiction, but this reality is just...so strange. So that's how you are able to bully people around like you do? How many people know who you are?"

"The team, close friends who need to know. A few of the upper brass at work but they are too scared to actually attempt to reveal any of it."

"What are you going to do if that reporter person recognized your voice?"

"He's not. The line was horrible, I made it that way as I knew I wouldn't be able to correctly modulate my voice. The Mimir voice that I use is an old accent of mine, one that I miss a lot, so I tend to fall into it when I’m tired or angry."

"I can vouch for the tired," Aaron said. His stomach rumbled, so he wandered to the kitchen area to find something to eat. He didn't want a banana, and the only other options were cold cereal or quick oatmeal. Sean had a lot of the packages of flavors that you just added boiling water to. Aaron checked the kettle and filled it up before turning it on. He grabbed four of the packages and dumped them into a bowl that would hold them and waited for the water to boil. He also set out three teacups and found tea bags that all three of them would like. He added sugar to Spencer's and left his and Sean's without it.

"So how did that work? I mean isn't the FBI pissed you are hiding among them?"
"Their forms cannot ask anything except for if we are a God. I never corrected anyone and never stated that I was the God of Psychology unless they said it first."

"So I don't need to feel bad about you being a sugar daddy for this entire trip?" Sean asked.

"No. I could never work another day in my long asked life, and with the money I make from stocks and various other things, I would never run out of money. I spend a lot of money during the year, and the FBI knows it. They also know I play a lot of cards and various other things. Anything else I had hidden from them and they know not to ask. I would never take a bribe for anything, I'm not built that way. I go after justice, and that's all I care about, sometimes revenge."

"I'll remember that," Sean said and he looked like he very much would remember it.

Aaron laughed and wrapped his arm around Sean to drag him into the kitchen as the kettle went off that the water was boiling.

Aaron watched as the skaters took to the ice for the warm-up. It was their third hockey game that week. Everyone single one of them against the Flyers. Two games had been the Islanders, but this was their first Rangers game. They had one more game they were going go to, and it was the next day against the New Jersey Devils. Spencer was debating going to Connecticut for the Saturday game between the Islanders and the Rangers.

"Dad, why did they bring that back?" Jack asked.

"I have no clue, but their fans seem to love it." Aaron looked at the ball of orange fur that was skating out on the ice. According to Spencer, its name was Gritty, and it was freaking out Aaron. It was not anything like what a Mascot should be, but everyone else seemed to love it. Jack was only a little freaked out by Gritty, but he still laughed at the crazy things that Gritty did. It was pre-season, so the Flyers were trying to gain as much gumption for the new mascot as they could. Aaron still wasn't sure why it was there at a game that wasn't at home, but he knew that it was getting the crowd worked up.

"Where is Spencer?" Sean asked. He eyed the thing that was skating on the ice trying to get the crowd worked up.

They were in seats that were in a small private box at the edge of the ice near where the Rangers team sat.

"Dad!" Jack yelled, and his arm pointed over to where the skaters came out during TV commercial breaks to clear the ice of snow. A person was being escorted out onto the ice with a black bag over his head. Aaron recognized Spencer from just the outfit that he was in. Which was a Vegas Knights jersey. Aaron knew that something terrible was going to happen, but the Knights had sent that to him overnight for proudly showing his Golden Knights pride at the first game they were at. Spencer had been shown on TV for it. The jersey was signed by every single member of the team, with Marc-André Fleury's number and name on the back.

"Hey, give him back!" a few of the Rangers who were on the ice called out.

"He's mine!" Gritty called out as he skated over to take possession of Spencer, and he took the black bag off of his head.

"No, he's ours we kidnapped him first," one of the Rangers said as he skated closer.

"Does anyone want to fight for him?" the announcer called as he stepped up onto the carpet area at
"Hey, little man," A voice said from beside Aaron. He looked to see that one of the bigger of the Rangers was standing and looking at Jack. "Wanna go and fight with us to rescue your Papa from that orange monstrosity?"

Aaron realized that the voice was also being put over the speakers. He had no clue what the hell had happened while Spencer had been getting them food, but it seemed to have turned into a giant show.

"YES!" Jack screamed. Jack turned to Aaron and held out his arms like he wanted to be picked up. Aaron picked him up and raised him up to where the Ranger could get him over the glass that separated them from the team.

"First we gotta get your armor on," one of the other members of the team said.

It took a few minutes, but Jack was in a small New York Ranger set of hockey pads and uniform. Aaron felt a little off at that, but as soon as Jack got onto the ice with two of the Rangers, the uniform changed to be the Capitals.

"Sorcery!" Gritty cried out as he moved Spencer to be in front of him. Even the Rangers moved back to where Jack was alone on the ice.

"Let my Papa GO!" Jack screamed. He looked like he was having the time of his life. He started to skate closer to Spencer, and as soon as he got close, he touched him. There was a flash of light, and then the whole arena went dark. Spotlights came on again, and Aaron saw that Spencer was free and in skates with Jack behind him. Gritty roared, and then it was a few seconds, and smoke started to envelop Gritty. He pulled his mascot outfit off, and there wasn't another costume underneath. It was the real deal. It looked like a giant orange furry thing.

"So you finally reveal yourself, huh?" Spencer said. He was smiling and took a few swipes of his feet on the ice and skated closer to him. "I felt you escape where you were stuck years and years ago. I've heard whispers of you. So what are you going to do now?"

"I like these guys. They play with me. I've always wanted a friend. They found me when construction in the arena broke into where I had been trapped. I've learned the error of my evil ways. I just want to play. I promise."

Gritty dropped to his knees and looked like was about to start to beg.

"Then I bind you to these men and women, and you are never allowed to be anything but the fun little brother of the Flyers."

It felt like electricity went through the entire arena. The crowd was dead silent until Gritty bowed his head. Cheers started up from the Flyers, and then the crowd followed after. Jack wrapped his arms around Spencer's waist and looked at Gritty.

"It's not nice to kidnap people!"

"No, it's really not, but he doesn't know any better. The Flyers are going to have to teach him a lot of good manners. Let's go back to our seats." Spencer turned around carefully and waited for Jack to turn as well before he started to skate over to where Aaron and Sean were. He snapped his fingers, and instead of skates, they had their shoes on, and then Spencer walked through the glass before he tugged Jack after him.

"Did you know about this?" Aaron asked, hoping his voice wasn't projected. He looked out at Gritty
who was still creepy but at least was less creepy now that he was not a creature hiding in a suit that
looked like him.

"No. I was getting food, which should be dropped off to us soon as I was promised that, and a few
staff came up to talk to me. They had a New God from the area tapped to do this, but she flaked on
them. So they asked me since they knew who I was from the news with that stupid cult. I thought it
would be fun. Though the faking being kidnapped was not that fun. I would do it again, though."

"So that's really a creature?" Sean asked.

"Yes. At some point, a kid-created it and didn't want to let go, so the thing that is now named Gritty
was trapped to become what he is now. Though, I don't know how he got trapped like he did.
Probably a prank from a God and the God forgot about him. That has happened before. More than
you would like to think. He really did get found when they were doing construction on the area."
Chapter 48

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

When humans look back at their childhood, they are never the same. The memories are not their original memories. They are rose-colored. Nothing ever survives intact, and humans hate it when something happens that ruins their look at their childhood. What do adult humans do, though when they look at their childhood changes everything for the better? What do you do when you find out that what you thought happened didn't. When you are left with the realization that your life would be different and probably not the best if that one thing had never happened.

October 2018

Aaron looked around the modestly decorated hall that he was standing in. He said modestly because what he had understood of it all was that it was put on by Old Gods. Anything that wasn't covered in gold and jewels was modest for them. The room only had a few people in it, and most of them were workers who were going to be serving food and drink. The same set of coloring coded wristlets were being used here as the clubs that were run by Gods. It wasn't hard to understand why when it was Gods who were running this, but it was a show of goodwill to the people. It was a colossal affair, and all of the money from it was going to a good cause. Aaron had been one of the first to arrive mainly because he was in DC already. Spencer and the rest of the team were on their way, but Aaron had got mixed up on the times. He had flipped the time for the party that was the next night at Jin and Petal's restaurant for Day of the Dead. The fact that the Gods in Aaron's life were all obsessed with the two holidays that were back to back made him laugh.

The woman that entered caught Aaron's eye and he couldn't take it off of her. She was beautiful and deadly looking, and it took a few seconds for Aaron to place her. Artemis. Aaron looked at the suit that he was wearing and really hoped that she found nothing wrong with it. He touched the edge of the mask that he was wearing. It wouldn't stop anyone who knew him from recognizing him, but it did offer him a buffer. Artemis looked around the room, not even seeing Aaron, or at least not showing that she was seeing him. Aaron didn't know how he felt about that until she started to bark orders out in a language that Aaron didn't know at all.

Every single person in the room snapped to attention and started to do what she told them to. It was interesting, to say the least. Aaron wasn't sure if the people were Gods or some other type of being. The Old Greek Gods and Goddesses had their own types of creatures that had ended up being made, Aaron had found out not too long before. Immortals. Humans who lived forever but didn't have any powers beyond the fact that they were hard to kill and healed well. There was not a lot of them, and they mostly stuck around their Gods and Goddesses. It had made Aaron really hope that Spencer never told him that Vampires were real and they sparkled. Which hilariously enough had caused Spencer to delve into books that he had never read before, he had a passing knowledge of them as they had been written and published but not actually read them.

Spencer had spent a weekend at several libraries reading teenage fantasy fiction. It had been quite entertaining to get the texts from him about the sex in them if they had sex. Spencer had also got online and blasted people who reviewed the sex. Aaron had read a few passages that Spencer had sent him, and yes it was horrible, but it wasn't like anyone wanted a sixteen-year-old reading porn level sex. Aaron really didn't want Jack touching any of it, soft almost laughable porn or hardcore until he was much older.
"You!" Artemis called out. She stalked over toward him with a grin on her face. She swept him up into a hug that he returned. It felt a little like coming home, which was strange as he had never met her before, at least not in this life. "Look at you trying to upstage me."

"Oh, you've not seen what Spencer is coming in then," Aaron said with a grin on his face. Artemis scoffed and slipped her arm into Aaron's.

"He'll always upstage me. His perfect lithe body with little fat to speak of. He's beauty and grace and everything that I hate about him because he doesn't care about it. He's a bastard, and you'll tell me nothing else. Now, what do you think of this all?"

"It's beautiful. Spencer didn't tell me that you were the one putting it on."

"No, he wouldn't. I swear he holds other secrets above his own. Tonight plans to be rather explosive."

"Really?" Aaron asked. He looked at Artemis out of the corner of his eye but looked back when two more people entered the room. It was obvious that they were Goddesses. Aaron couldn't look away from them.

"Athena, Aphrodite!" Artemis said as she walked over to hug both of them.

Aaron stayed where he was because if this was who was here already, he wasn't sure that he wanted to know who else was going to be there.

"Don't worry, none of them are going home with a Human," Apollo said from behind Aaron. A drink was held out, and Aaron took it and downed it in one go. Apollo laughed, so Aaron flipped him off. "Where is your better half?"

"He's on his way from Quantico. I was up here for a meeting, so I just stayed. So what is going to go on here?"

"That's a surprise for everyone." Apollo leaned over and pressed a kiss to Aaron's cheek, and then he was gone.

More and more people started to arrive, nearly all of them were Human. Aaron wasn't sure what the hell was going on and what was going to happen, but he found himself a nice spot to where he could look at everything that was going on and see it all. The team arrived with little fanfare. Aaron had been wearing his guns when he arrived, so he just hadn't taken them off but looking at Spencer, he saw that he was also wearing two guns. The whole team was wearing at least one. Aaron hadn't thought a single thing when he had been waved through security as he was used to it. However, to see so many FBI agents with guns were strange at and an event like this.

Then John Richmond entered the area. He wasn't alone. He was with his top two underlings that helped him with God matters in the FBI and everywhere else. Aaron straightened his suit, but he didn't move from the corner where he was. JJ was tucked in close to Spencer as she had been since they had got back from her hometown. The shining new necklace that her two boys had got for her was on her neck, and the necklace that she had worn for years was with Spencer. Aaron hadn't asked why Spencer wanted it, and JJ had just been glad to be rid of it once it had been released from evidence in the case.

JJ had shown everyone exactly how much of a strong person she was. She had endured the largest wound in her history being ripped open in front of her. Had to deal with her childhood being reshaped without her approval. Aaron knew that she was strong as she couldn't be anything but and
have become what she had become, but this had shown the others who doubted her, those that worked with her that saw her as someone who was weak because she wasn't a full profiler. JJ had her job, and she did it well, and while she wasn't a full-on profiler, she was one in Aaron's eyes. She was content where she was and dealing with what she dealt with. There were times that she had the harder job, dealing with the media and irate politicians who wanted to do what they wanted without a care as to what it did to the case because they thought that they were right.

"Welcome!" Apollo called out as he approached the podium that was on the small raised stage at the back of the room. Spencer and the team were at the back of the crowd that was there. The room was still only about half full as far as people versus seats went, and it was still early. "Please eat and drink whatever you want. A word of warning though. There are drinks going around that you are not allowed to have if you are human. They will make you sick, and none of us want that, so if the server denies you the drink and you start to get shirty, you will be tossed on your ass outside, probably literally landing on your ass so don't say I didn't warn you." Apollo got down from the stage and walked to Spencer before hugging him. He shook hands with the rest of the team before pointing back at Aaron.

Spencer's eyes found Aaron's, and he looked very happy to see him. Aaron took in the full effect of Spencer's suit. Aaron had not got to see much more than a glimpse of the eggplant-colored suit with the lilac shirt and stitching, even his pocket square was lilac. Spencer's tie was also eggplant. He was drawing the eyes of many people in the room right up until Spencer wrapped his arms around Aaron and kissed him full on the mouth. Aaron settled his hands on Spencer's hips and held onto him tightly. He grinned into the kiss. Aaron thought that Spencer was beautiful in what he was wearing, and he wanted to make sure that Spencer knew it.

"So why the big security presence?" Aaron asked when Spencer tipped his forehead into Aaron's.

"Because they are coming out," Spencer said.

"Coming out what?" Aaron asked but as soon as the T in what came out of his mouth he knew. They were all going to come out as Old Gods. "Oh, Gods."

"Yes, well. We all feel it coming, coming more to a head. There are more and more New Gods that are being targeted, and while we have all done what we can for them, we need to blow it wide open and find the Old Gods that are doing it. Artemis has found a small nest and found about a plot to kill a few more, but they were saved. So tonight the FBI and the Old Gods are going to join forces."

"You?" Aaron asked.

"No. I would warn you if it was me. Mimir is being held back to protect him more than anything."

"So a joint task force of sorts?"

"Yes. We hope to recruit a few New Gods to it as well. This is also a Gala event, and the money raised from it will go to various human charities in the area. It's going to be interesting to see what happens if anything in the backlash of this."

"What happens if the Old Gods start to target the other Old Gods that support this?"

"Artemis and Athena are getting ready to go through the FBI Academy as part of this. They will run two different task forces with the help of a Supervisory Special Agent that John chooses. He would rather have me on the team, but he knows that he won't be able to pry me and by extension you out of the BAU anytime soon. So he's going to pick a few others that are ready to have their own team and don't mind working with Gods."
"There is even an agent that we were able to pull from NCIS be the head of the whole thing."

"Not someone int he FBI?"

"He's going through the Academy on the whole prior service thing as an NCIS agent. FLETC was good, but you know that with the God stuff he's gotta do his rounds."

"I look forward to meeting him."

"You have, Aaron. You have met him. Though Fornell thought that he would dry him from Gibbs' cold dead hands."

"DiNozzo?" Aaron asked. He smiled because DiNozzo would be a good lead agent for that team. It would have been good to get an FBI agent to do it, but DiNozzo had been the one to deal with all things Godly because Gibbs had refused to. If a case had a God as a witness or even an UnSub. It was DiNozzo who had dealt with it.

"He's not here now. They are saving that for the office FBI press spot, but the Director agreed that it would be better if the first mention came from the Gods and not the FBI."

"So how long are you staying?"

"We are staying as long as Artemis wants us to because we are part of the God faces of the FBI."

"This is very true. We are one of the few faces that are seen a lot. Most of the New Gods would rather hide. Though in my case, I never had a chance given my job. Though I am very content where I am."

"I know. I think that you'll stay where you are forever."

"No. I'll probably want to settle down at some point and take over the Section Chief job."

"What?" Spencer stepped back from Aaron, his arms dropping from around Aaron's neck and he looked at him. There was shock in his eyes. Aaron didn't think it was possible to shock him anymore.

"I'm content where I am for now, but I figure that at some point, a long way down the road, I will want to settle for a while. Today's meetings had the Director and I talking about it. He was already putting into place job contracts for special cases like me. I won't be able to stay settled behind that desk, so when the time comes that I don't want to be the Section Chief anymore, I'll train someone else and take over a special BAU team that will work the dangerous cases."

"What the hell would I do stuck at Quantico?"

"Ah, see that's the beauty of what I want to do. You would take over for me."

Spencer actually was dumbfounded with those words. "And when you come back?"

"You can keep your team or come to mine as my co-lead. The Director is well aware that you and I are a package deal and that even if I were Section Chief, I would want to go on cases on occasion. It's best for a Section Chief to do that. Cruz has shown him that. The teams all worked better, knowing that Cruz understood their job and what it meant. There was also the fact that the Director swore that no Section Chief would ever be put into the job that had not done fieldwork in the recent past in their career. It worked better that way."
"So what is good to eat here?" Simmons asked as he stepped up behind Spencer. The man was still adjusting to being on the BAU instead of the IRT, but he wanted to be home more with his wife being pregnant again. It had been a shock and was their fifth, so Aaron had gladly made room for him on the team when he had been asked. It was strange having seven of them in the field, but they made it work. JJ and Kate shared, Prentiss and Simmons roomed together, and Dave got his own room like he wanted. The only issue had been Aaron making sure that his overall budget wasn't going down, and it wasn't. JJ welcomed it as then she didn't have to leave the station house as much and could keep an eye on the media-related issues. She hadn't had a lot of bigger issues with it, but as more and more realized that Spencer and Aaron were Gods, the media came out. There were some areas of the country that never had a God visit, at least as far as they knew.

"Oh, everything is good," Spencer said as he turned around. There was a server with a rather large tray that was covered in a good bit of each kind of food that was on offer as an appetizer.

Aaron started to laugh when the entire tray was handed over to Spencer. The server walked away with a bow. Simmons looked a little off-kilter looking at the tray of food.

"So, Spence is that for all of us or just you?" JJ asked.

"I don't know?" Spencer said. His eyes were glowing though with a happiness at the food that was in front of him.

"I don't understand." Simmons looked at Spencer then at Aaron and finally at JJ who had been the nice one to help him with a lot of things that he didn't get from not being on the team.

"Don't ruin my fun," Spencer begged, but he was smiling as he said it.

"You never heard about his love of food on the IRT?" Prentiss asked.

Aaron looked her dress up and down. He could see the holster on her thigh, just like with JJ and Callahan. Everyone was dressed to impress. They made a band of very

"No. Garrett just talked about how smart he was and things like that. Never anything about food."

"Don't let him convince you to do a food eating contest against you. He will win." Prentiss looked like she might enjoy watching Spencer cream Simmons in an eating contest, but Aaron also knew that she wouldn't let it happen.

"Why?" Simmons asked.

"Do you remember a few weeks ago on your first case. The lead detective met us at the door with a tray of snacks for Reid?" JJ asked.

"Yes. Reid was stressed about something to do with I would assume this."

"Yes," Spencer said.

"And he was a little off, so I assumed that JJ had called ahead and had someone pick up food."

"No. We worked with him when he had lived in a different city. His wife got a new job, and so he moved and started at the bottom of the totem pole again. It was a peace offering, as he had been an asshole to me during the last case. He just happened to have a good bit of luck and appeased me at the right time."

"How do you put away that much?" Simmons asked.
"I have a dimensional store in my stomach that the food goes into until it's needed," Spencer said with a straight face.

Simmons looked at the rest of the team before focusing on Aaron. All of them were nodding their head in agreement. Callahan was the first to break and started to laugh.

"His body turns it into Godfuel as Morgan used to call it, I'm told," Callahan said.

"Really?"

"Yes. I don't get full. I could be shoving food into my stomach every single second of the day, and I would never gain an ounce of fat or get full. I do stop at roughly a certain amount until I am healing up from injury or something like that. Or if I have used a lot of my God powers. It's my recharge."

"Seriously?" Simmons asked.

"Yes. There are actually a lot that refuels using food. Aaron can, but he usually sticks to normal amounts of food, just eats more often. Jack laughs that Aaron just has to be different from me."

Simmons laughed and shook his head a little. He did reach out and grab one of the canapes from the tray.

Spencer walked over to a table that had a reserved sign on it but no names. He settled down with his back to the wall and an eye on the whole room. JJ took the seat on his right side, and Aaron settled on his left, and the others settled around. There were no empty seats left. The reservation sign had handwriting on the side that Aaron could read from that side. It said Reid's Harem. Aaron laughed and figured that it was Apollo being an asshole.

"So are we the security for this event?" Callahan asked.

"For the most part, yes. There are other agents milling about inside and outside. There is going to be too many high standing people here tonight, politicians and the like." Spencer's eyes didn't leave the people that were milling about.

Aaron could see a whole bunch of people who were some of the movers and shakers in DC. They would be putting a lot of money up for the charities. He just wasn't sure what was being offered. He didn't figure that it was anything that wasn't legal, or at least seemingly legal.

"So what is being offered?"

"Dates. It's a charity auction. All of the Old Gods that are revealing themselves are on auction."

"And the people here knew this before they came?"

"No. They have no clue what is being offered just that it's a once in a lifetime thing and to bring their checkbooks."

"Interesting. So it's dinner and a show?" Dave asked. He grabbed a few pieces of the food on the tray, and it prompted the others to grab some as well. When the dish was nearly empty, another server came over with a new tray and settled it down, holding the first up long enough for everyone to grab the last few things. A tray of champagne flutes was brought around next. There were two that had purple rings on the top of the glasses, and Spencer grabbed those first, handing the second to Aaron.

"Yes, it will prove to be very interesting. There is going to be a massive show first. Then a question
and answer session with the press that is allowed in. The auction will follow that once the press has left. Anyone who wins a date with one of the Gods or Goddesses has to sign a waiver that states they will not sell the rights to an interview or anything like that. They can talk about it in interviews, but they can't sell anything."

"Did you help put this on?" Prentiss asked.

"Yes. I was in the background. Connecting the right people and such."

Aaron looked at Simmons. The agent had not been read into the truth of who Spencer was yet and Spencer had not given Aaron a timeline on when he would which was kind of strange, but it was always Spencer's choice of who he was going to tell and who he wasn't going to. Aaron wasn't sure what was holding back Spencer from telling him, but he knew it wasn't anything that Spencer had figured out either.

"Oh, dear God," Dave said.

Aaron looked where Dave was looking, and he saw them, the Old Gods, all of them coming out on stage with the Director of the FBI following behind them to walk in front of them all at the end. Aaron recognized a few of them from images in a scrapbook that Spencer had, but some of the photos were from when photography had started. It was a broad spread of Old Gods from across the world. Twenty-five of them.

"Welcome Illustrious people!" Apollo was grinning as he talked. "You are all in for a treat. The Gods of the United States and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are teaming up to help with the deaths of the New Gods at the hands of the Old Gods. We look forward to a more accepting world that we live in as we adjust to what is changing."

"Who are you?" one of the reporters yelled out.

"Who am I? Well according to the file that I was hired under this latest go around, I am Doctor Malcolm Sheets, but tomorrow when I change all of my registrations at my job and at the DMV, I will be known again by the name that I was given when I was created. Apollo."

The cameras started to flash, and more and more questions were being thrown out as the reporters figured out that the people behind Apollo had to be Gods as well. It was turning into a circus, but it was the kind of spectacle that it seemed the Gods were wanting as they all seemed rather happy with it.

"So who wants to make bets on who gets the highest and the lowest bids?" Spencer asked.

"Sounds like a fun team building exercise." Aaron pulled out his wallet and laid a few bills down. The pot would be split between whoever won the two different instances. It was the way of things when they made bets like this. Spencer laid down a little more money, but then he carried a hell of a lot more on him. Aaron still had a little bit of his holdover from when he had been human and not carrying a lot on him. Spencer rarely was carrying less than about a thousand dollars in hundred dollar bills.

Apollo got the crowd settled down and made sure that the reporters knew that they were going to get thrown out if they didn't wait for the question and answer session that would follow after his announcement. This was the kind of thing that was going to make or break a few careers of the reporters if they couldn't keep their mouth shut. The Director was very strict on who was allowed at his press conferences as far as individual reporters went. He had been burned a few times over the whole thing with Gods being brought in and working at the FBI. Some reporters had agendas that
didn't mesh well with that the truth of the matter was.

Spencer leaned over into Aaron, resting his head on Aaron's shoulder before picking up his chair and just scooting all the way over to him.

The reporters were quiet as the conference went through, and then the Gods were all introduced.

"Yes, NBC," Apollo said after the Director had finished his speech.

"What about Mimir?"

"Mimir does his own thing, and he always has. If he ever chooses to reveal himself as Mimir, he will make sure that the world knows, don't worry. No one is going to be scooped on that."

"Why does Mimir hide?"

"Mimir is the knowledge of the world in one body. Gods can be killed, anyone who tells you different is trying to sell you a falsity. I have killed other Gods when they became dangers to the world. We are Immortal but not indestructible. It takes a lot to kill us, and we know well what can and can't kill us. Mimir is one of the oldest, and he has seen the most, this makes him careful with anything. He doesn't mind doing those radio shows and such as he can make sure that no one can trace him, but we all remember Nazis and Witch Trials. We are different, and many Humans fear us. Do we really want to spend the next half an hour discussing Mimir and not any of us and what we are doing with the FBI?"

With that, Apollo pulled the conference away from Mimir. Aaron looked at the team, and thankfully, no one was looking at Spencer. Simmons was focused on the Gods and Goddesses at the front of the place. It was interesting to see him so focused on something. Aaron hoped that it wasn't going to be long before Spencer told him as the team would want to talk about this whole thing with Spencer and not have to couch what they were saying. Still, they would be able to talk about it as Simmons went home quickly after getting home from cases. He worked on file as soon as he could that way he could go home and spend time with his wife and children.

"I've read a lot of conspiracy theories on Mimir," Simmons said.

"Like the one where he is not a god but a group of ghostwriters who had been paid a lot of money," Spencer said.

Aaron groaned, and Spencer laughed. It was a hobby of Spencer's to see what people were saying about him online. Aaron hated it, but Spencer found it all so damned funny. The team devolved into the random and weird as hell theories on Mimir all the while Mimir was right there and nothing like what anyone thought he would be like. Aaron was okay with the world never knowing who Spencer really was, but he also knew that it was very possible that the world would know one day. He just had to get ready for it.
Chapter 49

From the Expansive Journals of Mimir, God of Knowledge

*History repeats itself for those who don't learn it. History also just repeats itself because time doesn't care. It's quite content to do what it wants when it wants. Humans cannot track time like Gods can, and it's a good thing because what they don't see happening that Gods stop, would scare the shit out of them. We see patterns and movements in the things around us. We see what Humans don't, and it's not always a good thing because even we cannot always stop it from happening.*

**February 2019**

Aaron felt his heart in his throat as he heard the gunshot go off. He didn't want it to be Spencer or JJ who had been shot that time. He didn't want to look at the camera feed that Garcia had hijacked so that he could see what was going on in that room. He looked at where he could see the injured woman who had been shot before. She was alive. JJ was alive. Even the woman they were saving from the man who was very off of his rocker as Garcia would say.

When they had been getting ready for the day, Aaron had watched as Spencer had put on the ankle holster and the gun that Aaron had given him so long ago. It had brought up memories of a time in Aaron's life where he had not been all that nice to Spencer. Aaron had been on the road to slowly becoming friends with him, but he had not exactly been the nicest to Spencer during that time. Aaron hadn't regretted his actions against Spencer in that ER room until after they had got home and he had seen the bruises on Spencer's chest on accident. Aaron had chosen not to say anything to Spencer about it as he had not wanted to bring up things that were painful and given's Spencer's comments about being a young genius in the Las Vegas school system had seemed painful.

The SWAT team was the first to breach. No one on the team was heading in there until it was secure. Aaron made sure of that. None of them were in the right headspace that they would be able to actually have an unbiased opinion on what was going on in there. The less emotion that was happened inside of that room, the better.

Spencer was one of the first to come out. He had the gun he had used in his hand, and he was looking at Aaron with a very strange look on his face.

Aaron wanted to wrap him in a hug and not let him go, but Spencer wouldn't like that public display of affection in this circumstance. He looked at the camera on the laptop in front of him and saw the hole in the head of the UnSub. "Nice shot."

"I was aiming for his leg," Spencer said with a quirk of his lips.

It was precisely the exchange between them when Spencer had used tat gun to save Aaron's life just about fourteen years ago.

"So I hate being taken hostage," Spencer said as he settled the gun on the hood of the car beside the laptop and then leaned against the side. Aaron moved to stand beside him.

"I know you do," Aaron said.

"I really hate having to kill an UnSub, and I really hate that UnSubs just don't give up when we catch them. There was no way this wasn't going to end in someone's death."
"We have Dave's wedding to look forward to," Aaron said with a smile on his face.

"Open bar and Rossi told me that he made sure to stock it with shit that would actually get you and I drunk. I'm looking forward to that."

"You really want to get drunk in public?" Aaron asked.

"It's better than not being drunk while everyone else is."

Aaron shook his head and laughed.

"You know," JJ said as she stepped up and grabbed Spencer's hand.

Aaron gasped as he saw the blood all over the one.

"Even if you are a God, it's better to get cuts cleaned up." JJ nodded toward the EMT, who had a kit ready to help Spencer. Aaron moved over to give the man room to work and set his things down.

"You used glass to cut your bindings. I knew you had to be bleeding."

"I barely felt it, so I forgot about it. We at least finished the case in time to get back home for the wedding. I'm looking forward to it."

Aaron let the conversation between JJ and Spencer wash over him. They were close, always had been, best friends with a lot of sibling bonds between them. It had been rocky at the start as no one had wanted a New God on the team in the way that he had been added, but it wasn't long before JJ had started to feel differently toward him.

"Will's calling me," JJ said as she reached into her back pocket and grabbed a phone that wasn't making a noise. Aaron saw the screen, though to see that it was ringing. "Hey."

"Hello, Will!" Spencer called out, making JJ laugh and shove at his shoulder. JJ walked away so she could talk to her husband in privacy.

"So what happened in there?" Aaron asked.

"UnSub tried to make the judge play a game. I took it over and manipulated him into letting JJ and I play. He was too unstable, and if I had struck out at him, I could have hurt someone else even worse. So I waited. I got my wrists free with the glass, and while JJ had him distracted with a heartfelt sob story about always loving me and how sorry she was at never telling me, I grabbed my gun and shot him. Clean in the center of the forehead so that he couldn't fire his gun at any of us. I know how to kill someone to make sure they don't pull a trigger and death spasm kill someone."

"I know that you do. That's not what's got me worried. Why did you kill him when you could have wounded him?"

"Because he was in a rage enough that I was not sure that shooting him anywhere where else would actually take him down without him shooting JJ. I had to make sure no one got injured."

"Okay, then." Aaron pushed off of the car and looked at the EMT. "He going to be fine?"

"Oh, yes. Shallow and not that bad. He'll be fine in a few hours. My partner is running and getting him some noddles from a local Chinese place. He said he could devour those with a fork. I'm not going to let him go until I see him eat it all."

"Reid, stay here." Aaron waited for Spencer to nod before he walked away. The EMT was
wrapping up Spencer's hand with gauze to make sure that it didn't bleed everywhere. The second EMT was headed back with a bag of food in his hand. Aaron looked at JJ, who was still on the phone with Will. Aaron knew that they were rock solid. They had their issues, and they had their trials, but they were in a wonderful relationship. A great deal of the BAU was now.

Callahan had her husband, Simmons had his wife, Prentiss and Jessica were stable enough for the relationship that they had. Aaron and Spencer were a great show of making it work, and Dave was getting ready to get married to his third wife again. It was a good show of happiness in the team. Garcia was the only one that was mostly unattached. She hadn't had a good and steady relationship that had lasted at all since she had backed away from Kevin after he had wanted more when she didn't. Aaron had taken pity on the man and helped him change departments so that he didn't run into her anymore and looked like someone kicked his dog in front of him when he did see her.

"Hey, Dave!" Aaron called out when they were getting ready to leave the scene when it was all taken care of. Everything that was left was up to the LEOs who were working the case.

"Yes?" Dave asked as he looked from where he had been talking to a reporter.

"Wheels up in forty."

"Okay."

Aaron texted the rest of the team, and then Morgan to let him know that if he could pick up Jessica and Jack on his way she had a ride home after and Aaron and Spencer would take control of Jack.

No one on the team had been there for any of the prior weddings for Dave. Aaron knew that a few of them were shocked at the understated venue and the small crowd that was there. It was everyone who was important to Dave, and that meant few people at all. Dave had a lot of friends, but he had very little family.

Aaron wasn't shocked that he was bullied into standing up with Dave as his Best Man while Krystall had her daughter Portia as her Maid of Honor. Michael was the Ringer Bearer while Grace was the Flower Girl. They were cute, but it was very evident that Michael was in the phase where girls had cooties as he didn't get close to Grace at all.

The wedding itself was short, and then it was time for the food and the drink. Garcia was in her element at the bar. Dave had bought the alcohol but didn't want a strange bartender there, so everyone had to make their own drink. Spencer had a glass of champagne in his hand, and it hadn't got empty. Aaron wasn't sure if Spencer had some kind of God magic going on with it or he was refilling it when Aaron wasn't looking.

"Dad!" Jack near screamed as Aaron got close to where the kids were all dancing, keeping an eye on the little ones. Hank was in the thick of it all, dancing like only a kid with no sense of rhythm or style could and make it look cute as hell. "Can I call Nymeria and Ghost?"

Aaron looked at Dave, who was close to them, and Dave nodded.

"STORMY!" Michael yelled and with a flash, the three made creatures appeared.

"Whoa," Simmons said as he stepped up with his two daughters in tow. The boys were already dancing with the others. All of the kids stopped and looked at the two Dire Wolves and the Dragon.

"And here we have Nymeria, she's Jack's Dire Wolf pet, and there is Ghost who is Henry's. Stormy is the dragon and Michael's. Nymeria and Stormy were made by Jack, but when Jack got older, Stormy moved onto Henry. Nymeria and Ghost were created by the boys when they were nearly
kidnapped. While they are what is considered an imaginary friend, do not even think that they can't hurt you. They adore children and will gladly give you all rides but please don't hurt them. They will bite back, and you won't like that." Spencer had Simmons' wife Kristy on his arm with a new glass of pink champagne in his hand.

"Jack's a rather vibrant child, isn't he?" Kristy asked.

"Yes, I'm sure that if he were so inclined, he would be able to make more imaginary friends even now. Why do you ask?" Spencer asked.

"Chloe and Lily had an imaginary friend, and it was interesting because I could see flashes of something at one point. I talked to my doctor about it, and he told me that most kids actually made their imaginary friend real, especially among twins."

"Twins are special, and they are adored by the magic that created all of us Gods."

"REID!" Garcia said as she walked over to him.

"Yes?" Spencer asked.

"I want to see magic flowers."

"Sure."

Spencer whistled and within seconds the room was full of falling cherry blossoms. Aaron looked up to see that there were a lot of Pixies up at the ceiling, dropping them. However, as soon as the petals hit the ground, they were gone. It kind of beautiful. Garcia wandered over to where there was an open spot on the dance floor and started to dance among the flowers.

"You are not a New God, are you?" Simmons asked as he stepped closer to Spencer and Kristy shuffled into his side.

"Whatever gave you that idea, Matt?" Spencer asked, a little bit of a feral grin on his face.

"Let's move this away from the kids," Aaron said before Simmons could say anything else. Simmons nodded as Aaron pulled him after him as they made their way to a corner where no one was but was still very much in the line of sight of the kids. They were having fun, but that didn't mean that a fight wouldn't start. Stormy would probably stop it before it got to be too big of a deal, but still, it was better to not have it start at all.

"You say too much that just doesn't mesh with what you try and show everyone," Simmons said.

"I've not been hiding as much as I used to when someone new came onto the team."

"You've not been hiding at all," Aaron said with a smile on his face.

"I got too used to not hiding at all."

"After that Gala event where the Old Gods auctioned themselves off for charity to help the world see them in a good light for the venture between the FBI and them to help nip the Old Gods that are killing New Gods, you were a little different and it took me a while but I placed it about a month ago when you talked about books. I know that you read a lot, but those books are obscure and not anything that I thought you would have read normally. Then you talked to that Old Norse God who had settled in Michigan. It was a little too close, and you knew him too well. You were friends."
"Yes, Loki and I are very close friends."

"Yeah, he nearly called you something else. I never caught it but paired with that book knowledge of something so obscure. Ir. He called you Ir as in Mimir."

"See, Aaron I told you he would do well on this team." Spencer gave Simmons a little bit of a bow.

"Wow," Kristy said. She was looking at Spencer like someone would if they were scared of him. He understood that because it was normal for a lot of humans. Kristy had never met a God before she had been introduced to Aaron and Spencer but now to have one of those Gods not be a New God but an Old God, not just any Old God either but who is considered the Old God of the world, was very, very scary.

"And you didn't want me to leave the IRT while you were pregnant," Simmons said.

"Well, I didn't realize that you would be working with an Old God who is known the world over. It's not like that was part of the packet information and all. It's not like all FBI agents meet an Old God. Is that why...?" Kristy trailed off and looked over at the kids.

"There is not a lot known about how kids are able to make their friends, but I've seen kids with a lot of them, especially when they grow up an only child. Jack's special but then doesn't every single parent think their kids are special and better than others?"

"Oh, which one is your kid?" Kristy asked.

"SAVE ME!" Jack screamed and then took off, running with Stormy running behind him, nipping at his heels. It was a regular game that they had played a long time ago. Aaron saw that Michael was laughing his ass off, nearly falling over as he watched.

"Oh, no!" Spencer called out and took off over toward where Jack was. He snagged Jack around the waist and hefted him up and out of Stormy's reach at the same time a sword appeared in his other hand. "Back you beast!"

Jack started to giggle, and the rest of the kids ran over, calling out for who they wanted to win, Spencer or Stormy. Aaron looked to see that all of the adults in the room were looking at the spectacle. Including the photographer, who was also taking what looked like a lot of pictures of it. Aaron wanted a few of those. He looked at Dave, who was smiling. His wife smiling beside him, she had been told about Spencer. Who he was by Spencer as soon as Dave had proposed in the elevator.

The team was a family, and it was never shown more than it was in that instant there when JJ rushed over when Stormy started to get the upper hand. Spencer made a sword for her so that she could help protect. Nymeria was the first Dire Wolf to get close, which made Dave rush over. Before the end, all of them were defending themselves against all manner of creatures that were coming to help either side. Peaches rode on Aaron's shoulder while launching flower petals at whoever got close.

"HA!" Spencer screamed as he jumped over to settle between Nymeria Ghost with Jack on his shoulders. "You are betrayed!"

Aaron laughed as he watched his lover as he started to fight against Simmons. Krystall was laughing with Portia at the sides. They looked happy, which was good. Aaron felt something hit him in the face, and he heard Peaches crying out in shock. It was a goo of some kind. Hubert was laughing. Aaron got the goo off of his eyes, and he saw that Hubert was on Jessica's shoulder who was on Spencer's side it seemed.
"Betrayed by all who love me!" Aaron cried out, and he laughed as Jack just laughed as well.

"Best wedding ever," Jack and Henry said at the same time.

Aaron had to agree.

End Notes

I write fanfiction for fun. It's a hobby and a stress relief. I refuse to stress over my writing. What you see is what you get. Errors, plot holes, and all. Thank you for reading my story!

I can be found on MeWe [here](https://www.mewe.com), join me there and we can discuss my fics and whatnot.

**Note on The Dusk and the Dawn:** There will be a hiatus between the posting of chapter 49 and then 50 will be posted. I will not write 50-52 until all of season 15 has aired to pick the best episodes to write about, plus the last chapter is going to be the last episode.

Please [drop by the archive and comment](https://example.com) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!